

Hafa Adai!

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\$600K grant enhances driver's license security. PAGE 2
Free concert for Ballesteros raises \$1.2K. PAGE 4

Inos nixes Sablan's request for lawsuit funding sources

Lawmaker says she has no other option but to go to court

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Rep. Tina Sablan says she is left with no choice but to go to court to compel the government to reveal its funding sources for Gov. Benigno R. Fitial's lawsuit against federalization.



Sablan

'I see no other choice at this point but to appeal to the courts for resolution.'

—Rep. Tina Sablan

This came about after Finance Secretary Eloy S. Inos declined Sablan's Open Government Act request for documents detailing where the local government is getting the money to finance the suit.

In a Dec. 19 letter to Sablan,

Inos said the documents requested are exempt from disclosure under the OGA "because they are not discoverable by the United States under the attorney-client privilege."

Sablan said she is disapp-

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'Guam-NMI high on NYT ranking for corruption'

Taoato Tano president Gregorio Cruz Jr. yesterday brought to the attention of the Legislature and the Executive Branch a recent *New York Times* article that ranks the states and territories in terms of levels of corruption.

In an e-mail to lawmakers and members of the Executive Branch, Cruz said the CNMI "made it to *New York Times*... listed under corruption."

Cruz said the most interesting chart in the article relates to how many convicted officials are produced for every one million constituents.

See GUAM on Page 4

Garment class action suit lawyer dies at 61



Meyerhoff

By VALERIE J. NELSON
(C) 2008, LOS ANGELES TIMES

LOS ANGELES—Al Meyerhoff, a prominent environmental and labor lawyer whose landmark cases included the 2002

See GARMET on Page 4



NEW POLICE OFFICERS

Thirty-six new police officers are joined by special guests of honor during the 19th Police Cycle Academy graduation yesterday at the Multi-Purpose Center. See story on Page 6.

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INSIDE



Doomed Romance

Leonardo DiCaprio and Kate Winslet finally get to test-drive a long-term relationship in "Revolutionary Road."

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"My family connects"

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Local

\$600K grant enhances driver's license security

By KRISTI EATON
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REPORTER

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security is giving the CNMI a \$600,000 grant to improve driver's license security through the REAL ID Act.

The grant is part of \$48 million that the Homeland Security released to the 50 states and six territories as part of the fiscal year

2009 Driver's License Security Grant Program. The six territories each received \$600,000.

According to the DHS, the purpose of the Driver's License Security Grant Program is to prevent terrorism, reduce fraud, and improve the reliability and accuracy of personal identification documents that states and territories issue.

The 2005 REAL ID Act re-

quires Motor Vehicle departments in issuing licenses to follow requirements on data and documentation. Each state or territory must also share their database with all other states.

The law, however, has not been without controversy. According to reports, President-elect Barack Obama and several state governors oppose the law, believing it violates personal privacy.

McDonald's rewards NMI teacher of the year

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

Recognizing the importance of education to the growth of the community, the management of McDonald's Saipan has given CNMI's 2009 Teacher of the Year Jim Phillips with a \$500 cash reward.

McDonald's manager/owner Joe Ayuyu personally turned over the money to Phillips yesterday, explaining that it has been the company's commitment to give the award to the year's best teacher.

"We've been doing this for a

long time," Ayuyu said.

Ayuyu was one of the panelists in the selection committee for the teacher of the year awardees in 2009.

Being a teacher of the year in the CNMI, Ayuyu said, Phillips would be an ambassador for all teachers in the CNMI.

"This is something that we should be all proud of because he is a local teacher and he has done a tremendous job," Ayuyu said.

He encouraged all businesses to support education because the islands' students are investments for the future.

Phillips, who has been teaching natural sciences, particularly Astronomy and Physics, at the Mari-

anas High School for the past five years, was named teacher of the year in the CNMI during Education Day on Nov. 26.

He is one of the 56 candidates from the different states for the national teacher of the year.

The national interview is set in March while President-elect Barack Obama will be announcing the final four; the teacher of the year will be known sometime in April or May.

"Every teacher has the chance to succeed. It is an honor to be chosen among the many hard-working teachers we have here. This is very significant to me," Phillips said.

Ayuyu said he is confident that Phillips would be chosen.



NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.

McDonald's general manager Joe Ayuyu, center, presents the \$500 reward to CNMI Teacher of the Year Jim Phillips yesterday in recognition of his efforts to give quality education to the students of Marianas High School. Also in photo is Ana Olaes, McDonald's Saipan marketing officer.

Camacho thanks Legislature for supporting CDA in CUC's debt

By KRISTI EATON
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REPORTER

Oscar C. Camacho, acting chief executive officer for the Commonwealth Development Authority, praised lawmakers for their help in requiring the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. to resolve the outstanding debt it owes the agency.

Public Law 16-17 requires CUC to resolve the longstanding debt owed to CDA. The utility agency owes CDA \$177.5 million in principal and interest.

The law states that CUC can issue stock in the amount of \$45 million to CDA to write off the debt.

"The Legislature helped us and assisted us in such a big way," Camacho said.

The two agencies have had legal disputes in the past over the debt.

CUC and the Public Utilities Commission have placed the debt as a priority. By Jan. 16, 2009, CUC must petition the PUC for approval of the stock transaction.

"Even if CDA doesn't do anything, CUC has to make it happen," Camacho said. "CUC has to make that preferred stock [transaction happen]. In my opinion they have to sign and not subordinate

CDA's interest."

During a public hearing earlier this month, consultants hired by PUC said once CUC resolved its debt to CDA the utility agency would go from insolvency to solvency overnight.

Camacho said that during that hearing he spoke with some of the legislators at the meeting, thanking them for their support of CDA.

"I said thank you. Thank you for standing pat," he said.

However, there have been some snags in the settlement.

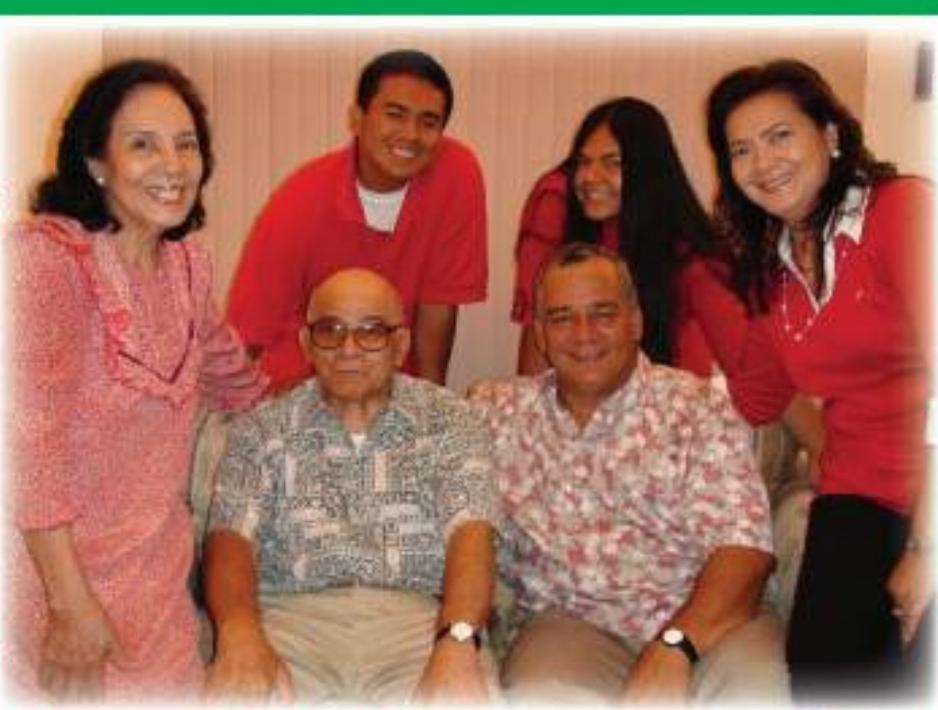
CDA legal counsel Ben Santos disclosed during a board of directors meeting that CUC's legal counsel has concerns about some of the transaction requirements.

According to Santos, CUC has concerns about the preferred stock having priority over CUC's other creditors. The CDA board of directors wanted the provision in case the utility company acquired loans and extended its assets for security, making CDA subservient, he added.

"It's very important that CDA has priority over other creditors and CDA has a major say-so on those items," Santos said.

Santos was planning on continuing discussions with CUC in order to reach an agreement.

"During this holiday season, let us remember, appreciate, and share the love and joy that this season brings." from the Kilili Family



**Merry Christmas
and Happy New Year**



Mobile health clinic unveiled



Gov. Benigno Fitial and Saipan Mayor Juan B. Tudela cut the ribbon during the official unveiling of the Prevention on Wheels Mobile Outreach Clinic yesterday.

By KRISTI EATON
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REPORTER

Saipan residents will now have an easier time receiving healthcare, thanks to the Prevention on Wheels mobile outreach clinic.

The state-of-the-art van was unveiled yesterday at the Commonwealth Health Center with several local officials present, including Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, acting deputy secretary for Public Health John Tagabuel, Saipan Mayor Juan Tudela, Rep. Oscar Babauta and officials from the Philippines and Palau consulates.

Fitial said the clinic is a promise

fulfilled he made to the CNMI.

"When I campaigned for Governor in 2005, I endorsed a platform plan for healthcare that included the provision of a mobile health clinic that would reach out to serve the public throughout our villages and local communities," he said.

Fitial said the Department of Public Health is working on a schedule that will allow for a variety of health screenings including blood pressure checks; body mass index; cholesterol screening; glucose testing for diabetes; hemoglobin tests; nutrition assessments; pregnancy tests; dental sealants; and dental

screenings.

Health information will also be delivered using the van and the mobile clinic can be used during disaster preparedness by delivering medications and vaccinations and used as a shelter during times of natural disasters.

The mobile clinic cost between \$200,000 and \$300,000 and was funded through the sin tax, a tax levied on alcohol and tobacco products. The funds were reallocated from the Kagman Wellness Center.

In 2006, members of the Commonwealth Diabetes Coalition met with Public Health officials to pitch the idea of the van.

Senate President Reyes also supports phase out of poker

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Senate President Pete P. Reyes expressed support yesterday to the Governor's Strategic Economic Development Council's resolution that seeks to eliminate all poker machines, except those at licensed casinos, in the CNMI by June 30, 2009.

In an interview with Saipan Tribune, Reyes said he is in favor of relocating the poker machines to a zoned area and eventually phasing them out.

"I think the poker machine [business] is not a good thing for the CNMI people. There's a lot of families that are suffering because of addiction to poker. So I hope that eventually it will be phased out," the senator said.

On Tuesday, Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, through press secretary Charles Reyes Jr., stated his support for SEDC's resolution.

Reyes said that Fitial agreed with the reasons cited by SEDC in passing the resolution.

SEDC co-chairs Robert Jones and Marian Aldan-Pierce and assistant co-chairperson Teresa K. Kim had urged the governor and lawmakers to work collaboratively to enact laws for the orderly phase out of poker machines, except inside licensed casinos, in the CNMI.

SEDC cited as reason for the phase out the increasing poker addiction in the CNMI that not only affects the gambler but also his or her family members and other residents, often in the form

of crimes and loss of jobs.

A s k e d about his position on the poker p h a s e out issue,

Reyes said he does support legislation that would eliminate

poker machines or, at the very least, relocate the machines to a zoned area established by the Zoning Board.

Reyes said that poker arcades, however, should be allowed to operate on Tinian and Rota where operating casinos is legal.

There are reportedly 680 poker machines on Saipan, 52 on Tinian, and 59 on Rota.

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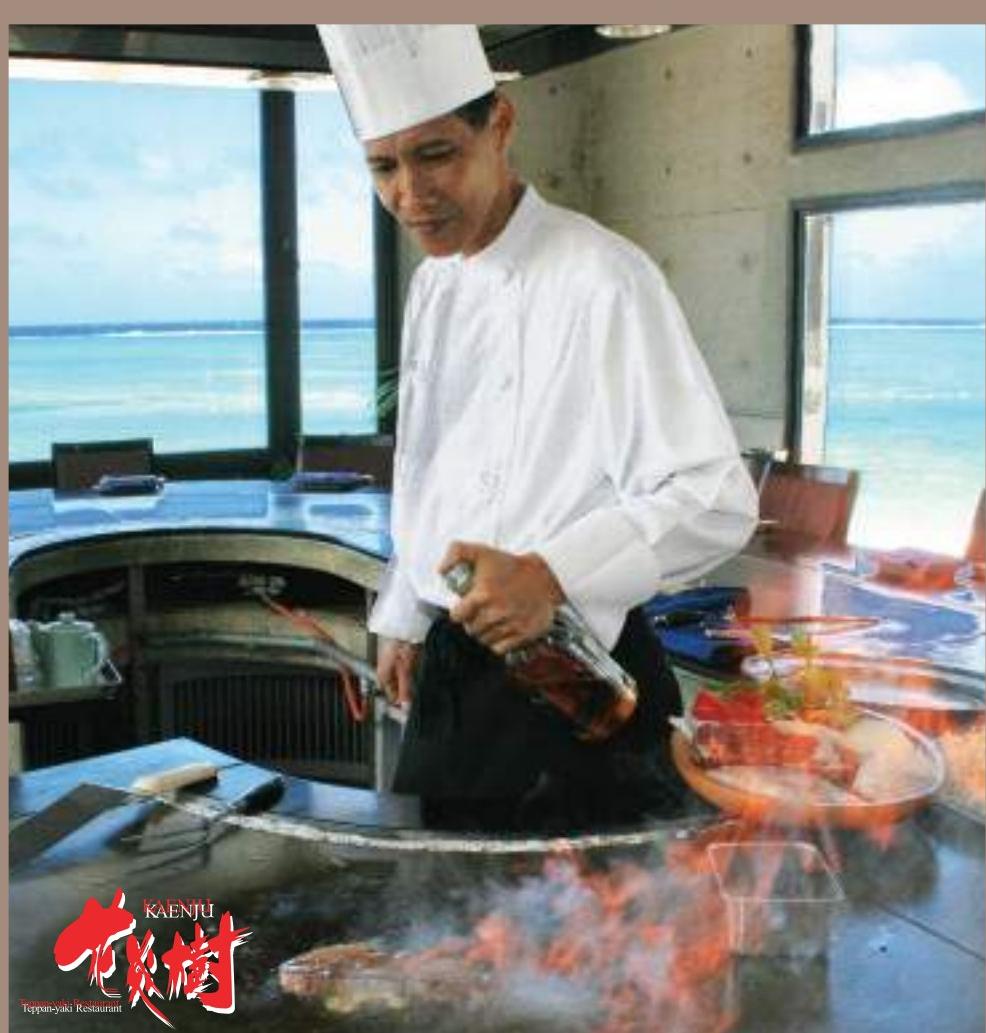
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This is to inform our readers and the Commonwealth community that the *Saipan Tribune* **will not** be published on **Dec. 26, 2008**, and **Jan. 2, 2009**, to enable its employees to observe the holidays on Dec. 25 and Jan. 1. Your understanding in this matter is greatly appreciated.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

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Palms Resort Saipan

Torres wants mixed martial arts regulated

Rep. Stanley T. Torres has filed a local bill that seeks to regulate on Saipan the sport of mixed martial arts, which he described as "too brutal and very violent."

Local Bill 16-26 will establish the Unarmed Combat Sport Act and create the Athletic Commission.

Torres said the sport of mixed martial arts has grown in popularity over the past few years. Collectively, there were reportedly over 10 mixed martial arts competition events on Saipan over the years.

"Such activities should be regulated and be licensed. [There is] neither a statute nor a promulgated rules and regulations in the book to take into account the sport of mixed martial arts," said Torres in the bill.

In the interest of protecting the contestants, the lawmaker said, it is necessary to establish statutes and rules and regulations to incorporate the sport of mixed martial arts, as well as updating any existing provisions related to boxing or wrestling.

Under the proposed Commission, a Medical Advisory Board

will be created and it shall consist of three members to be appointed by the governor.

The Medical Advisory Board will prepare and submit to the Commission appropriate standards for the physical and mental examination of contestants.

"The Commission shall ensure that applicable tests for HIV/AIDS, TB, and other communicable diseases, and the mandatory requirement of a CT scan, are included in the standards to be promulgated and approved," according to the bill. (*Ferdie de la Torre*)



2008.11.21

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

INOS

From Page 1

pointed but not surprised by the Finance Secretary's refusal to disclose basic information about how taxpayer funds are being spent for a lawsuit that has been filed by the governor on behalf of the entire CNMI. "I see no other choice at this point but to appeal to the courts for resolution," Sablan said.

Press secretary Charles Reyes Jr. said it is "very unfortunate that Ms. Sablan is interested in pursuing more litigation unnecessarily."

Reyes said the administration believes that, based on the advice of its lawyers, it is acting according to the law.

"We are confident that our position is a legally valid. We

are prepared to provide our information after the federalization litigation is over," he said.

The lawmaker had requested copies of contracts related to the lawsuit against federalization, including the contract between the CNMI government and law firm Jenner & Block; documents on the payments of the contracts; documents detailing funding sources for the contracts; and documents identifying where money was reprogrammed in order to finance the lawsuit.

Acting Attorney General Gregory Baka earlier declined to produce the same records for Sablan, arguing that such documents are exempt from the OGA because they are related to a pending issue in the lawsuit and would not be discoverable

by the United States.

Baka's decision prompted Sablan to file the same OGA request with Finance on Dec. 11, seeking records related to funding sources for Fitial's lawsuit.

In his Friday response to Sablan's request, Inos said documentation identifying funding sources and contracts between the CNMI and outside litigation counsel "has been made indisputably relevant to the Section 903 controversy" by the lawmaker's letter to the governor dated Oct. 16, 2008.

Inos said the exemption from OGA disclosure applies only while the Commonwealth's Section 903 litigation remains pending.

Once the lawsuit is concluded, Inos said, Sablan may then freely inspect the pertinent records.

Sablan, however, argued that the Fitial's administration's claims of exemption from the OGA hold no water in this case.

She pointed out that the administration has already publicly estimated a budget of \$400,000 for the lawsuit and that it is no secret at all that the CNMI is in a serious financial crunch.

The Legislature, Sablan noted, even came up with a committee report that rejects Fitial's request for appropriation for the lawsuit.

The committee report had deemed that the CNMI cannot afford the lawsuit and that funds would be better spent on essential services, she said.

"The CNMI's budgetary challenges are already matters of public record...so why the

secrecy at this point about the source of funding for the litigation?" the lawmaker asked.

Sablan raised three issues in Inos' letter.

First, Sablan said, the use of the word "indisputably" in the secretary's letter suggests that Baka's previous response to her OGA request was at that time "disputable" even in the acting AG's eyes.

"In other words, there was ambiguity about whether or not the OGA would apply with respect to my request, and the Administration, under the advice of the acting AG, has chosen not to liberally construe the law, and not to err on the side of openness and transparency, but rather on the side of secrecy," she said.

Second, Sablan said, the De-

partment of Justice memo that cited her original Oct. 16 letter to the governor did not refer to her request for financial records related to the lawsuit. Rather, she said, the DOJ memo cites only the other part of the letter, which was the request for clarification on Fitial's standing to file the suit without explicit authorization from the attorney general.

Finally, she said, the so-called "indisputable relevance" of funding sources and contracts to the controversy and the claimed OGA exemption, are "like the Governor's standing to file this lawsuit in the first place, certainly and absolutely disputable."

Sablan believes that the records she requested should be open for public inspection now, as public funds are being spent.

GUAM

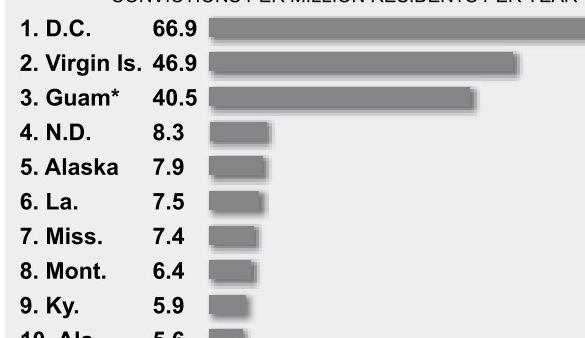
From Page 1

"These charts are very revealing, especially corruption per percent of population. Other countries may be worse...but if you compare us to American corruption...we are at the top of the list," according to the Taotao Tano president.

The article's graphic regarding convictions per million residents per year shows Guam-CNMI in third position,

The Guilty, per Capita

CONVICTIONS PER MILLION RESIDENTS PER YEAR



* Guam includes Northern Mariana Islands

Source: THE NEW YORK TIMES

just behind the U.S. Virgin Islands and topnotcher District of Columbia.

The graphic indicates that Guam-CNMI ranks 29th with respect to the number of convicted public officials from 1998 to 2007. Florida was on the top of the list, while Nebraska "continues to shine as a beacon of good government," according to the article.

The article was prompted by the recent scandal surrounding Illinois Gov. Gov. Rod Blagojevich, who allegedly tried to put up for

sale the Senate seat left vacant by President-elect Barack Obama. The issue has prompted Internet bloggers to label Illinois as the most corrupt states in the U.S.

The *New York Times* article, published on Dec. 13, examined this premise, using three methods of finding out which state is the most corrupt.

Based on the sheer number of guilty officials, Florida was tops, followed by New York, Texas, Pennsylvania, California, Ohio, Illinois, New Jersey, District of Columbia, and Louisiana.

The second method, based on how many convicted officials are produced for every one million constituents, showed the District of Columbia on top, primarily because of the high concentration of ranking officials in Washington D.C., followed by the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam-CNMI, North Dakota, Alaska, Louisiana, Mississippi, Montana, Kentucky, and Alabama.

The third method surveyed state house reporters and the results showed Rhode Island as the most corrupt. (*Ferdie de la Torre*)

GARMENT

From Page 1

settlement of a class-action lawsuit against some of America's biggest clothing retailers that alleged sweatshop abuses on the island of Saipan, has died. He was 61.

Meyerhoff died Sunday of complications related to cancer at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, said his wife, Marcia Brandwynne. More than a month ago, he learned that a rare blood disorder that had been diagnosed a year ago had developed into leukemia.

The lawsuit filed on behalf of 30,000 immigrant Saipan workers alleged a pattern of long hours, low pay and other objectionable working conditions in garment factories that produce more than \$1 billion of clothing annually for U.S. stores. Recruited mainly from nearby Asian nations, workers toiled in

what Meyerhoff called "indentured servitude."

The case was "far and away the most ambitious litigation ever brought involving sweatshops," Meyerhoff said on National Public Radio in 1999.

The \$20-million out-of-court settlement of the suit known as Doe v. the Gap involved more than 20 major U.S. retailers. The companies did not admit wrongdoing but agreed to adopt a code of conduct for the workplace and create a fund to pay for back wages and independent monitoring of factories on Saipan, an island about 3,700 miles southwest of Hawaii that is a U.S. commonwealth.

In his blog for the Huffington Post last year, Meyerhoff wrote that Rep. George Miller, D-Calif., chairman of the House Education and Labor Committee, "fought an often lonely battle to clean up the island's working conditions and improve its minimum wage."

Monday, Miller said Meyerhoff was always "trying to figure out how to deliver justice to different groups of people whether they were farmworkers or immigrants or people who had been damaged by employers..."

"He had a range of interests, a sense of outrage and a tremendous sense of humor that all sort of came together with his remarkable legal talents," Miller said.

Albert Henry Meyerhoff Jr. was born into a working-class family on Sept. 20, 1947, in Stafford, Conn. He was bullied by the older boys in town, which caused him to develop "an active dislike of the abuse of power," he later said.

After earning a bachelor's degree in 1969 from the University of Connecticut, he found the first day of law school at Cornell University to be life-changing, Meyerhoff later said.

"When he sat in his first class,

all of a sudden he became comfortable in his own skin. From that moment until the day he died, he thought what he did in life was exactly what he should be doing," said Brandwynne, a veteran local newscaster and news executive.

Straight out of Cornell in 1972, Meyerhoff joined the nonprofit California Rural Legal Assistance and made \$60 a week representing farmworkers and the rural poor.

He successfully challenged a statute that prevented undocumented immigrant children from attending public school and sued the University of California over using public research funds to promote agricultural mechanization.

In 1981, an interest in science and technology prompted Meyerhoff to join the Natural Resources Defense Council, a nonprofit environmental advocacy group. As director of the council's public health program,

Meyerhoff brought countless cases to trial under Proposition 65, the anti-toxics initiative that passed in 1986.

Joel Reynolds, director of the defense council's Southern California program, said Meyerhoff "was always looking for creative ways to use the law."

"He was a rare combination of intellect, passion, humor, creativity and absolute commitment to the public interest, particularly those less fortunate in terms of economic and social circumstances," Reynolds said. "He had a brilliant mind and a heart as big as a Volkswagen."

To pressure the chemical industry to agree to tougher standards on pesticides, Meyerhoff invoked a little-used Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act amendment that prohibited animal carcinogens in processed foods.

"The tactic forced a crisis requiring the industry to negotiate," Meyerhoff later recounted. It led to the Food Quality

Protection Act, which resulted in the ban of several dozen carcinogenic pesticides.

Actor and activist Mike Farrell, who was a close friend, called Meyerhoff "a glass-half-full man (who) always saw the humor no matter how difficult the situation. He was angry about the way people were abused and the way the environment was abused, but he always saw the hope and made the argument for the positive outcome."

In 1998, Meyerhoff joined Coughlin Stoia, a major class-action law firm. There, he fought for the rights of Saipan's offshore garment workers, Enron shareholders and many others.

"I worked on issues I believe in with extraordinary people doing extraordinary things," Meyerhoff once said. "What beats that?"

In addition to his wife, Meyerhoff is survived by his daughter, Leah; his mother, Ruth; and brothers George and Alan.

AWARDS CEREMONY

Saipan Mayor Juan B. Tudela, third from right, joins members of the Micronesian Repatriation Association (Okinawa) at the recent award ceremony for Choke Ginoza, chairman of the association, held in Okinawa, Japan on Nov. 29, 2008. Ginoza was awarded a Meritorious Recognition Award for his unselfish and untiring undertaking for more than three decades. Shown from left, Jose D.L.C. Tenorio, staff; Mrs. Ginoza; Tudela; Zenichi Taira and another member.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

IN APPRECIATION

The Friends of the Mariana Islands presents a certificate of appreciation to Mobil Oil Mariana Islands, Inc. and Cecile B. Suda, third from left, manager, Public Relations & Government Affairs of Mobil Oil Mariana Islands, Inc., whose financial donation supported the FMI Environmental Restoration Drainage Project, which involved cleaning up the Tun Herman Pan Road (Airport Road) up to ISA Drive on Saipan. From left to right, Jonathan Law of Exxon Mobil, Public Affairs Manager; Camilo Laoeng, FMI board of directors member; Cecile Bamba Suda, manager, Public Relations & Government Affairs of Mobil Oil Mariana Islands Inc.; Cathy of Mobil; Melecia Marquez, FMI business manager; Marites Aquino Castillo, FMI president/chairwoman; Bill Matson, FMI special adviser; Anthony Wenceslao of Mobil Saipan, and the youngest Environmental warrior, Betty A. Matson.

LPG price cut looms anew

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSISTANT EDITOR

Liquefied petroleum gas users may expect another round of price decrease next month, according to LPG supplier Wushin Corp.

After the company slashed prices by \$0.45 last Nov. 27 as post-Thanksgiving and pre-Christmas present to the island's LPG users, Wushin said worldwide trends point to another price decrease in January 2009.

"There might be a price change/decrease by January 2009 because of the world market trend but it [is not sure] because it all depends on the shipments of [the] LPG mother vessel to Guam and the schedule. Let's just hope there will be more of the price reduction," the company said in a statement.

Price trends from Saudi Aramco shows that the cost of LPG is at Tudela at Obama inauguration

By KRISTI EATON
kristi_eaton@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Saipan Mayor Juan B. Tudela will be in attendance as Barack Obama is sworn in as the 44th president of the United States on Jan. 20 in Washington D.C.

Tudela will be in the nation's capital for the U.S. Conference of Mayors, which will be held Jan. 17-19 and will stay to watch the inauguration.

Officials are predicting as many as 1.5 million people will watch Obama being sworn in to office. Tudela said he doesn't always

its lowest levels for the year.

March 2008, which is the earliest baseline month available, saw the bulk cost of propane at \$820 and that of butane at \$825. It was at its highest level in July 2008, when propane hit \$905 and butane \$950.

Prices began to dramatically decrease starting November 2008 when it was pegged at \$490 for both propane and butane. Currently (December 2008) the bulk cost of propane is \$340, while that of butane is \$335.

The company's recent decision to slash prices resulted in the cost of the 90-gallon LPG cylinder dropping from \$114.50 to \$106.50, the 50-gallon LPG cylinder from \$67 to \$62, the 40-gallon LPG cylinder from \$56 to \$52, and the 20-gallon LPG cylinder from \$29.75 to \$27.75.

Wushin also clarified that the price of LPG is not tied to the

wet fuel price (diesel and gas), because "no matter what the pump price [are], it will not determine the price of LPG except for the landing cost of which fuel price affects the cost of freight and handling, particularly fuel surcharges."

Wushin is a wholesaler of LPG for commercial purposes, sells LPG cylinders for residential customers, and is a retailer of LPS accessories.



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WORLD RESORT SAIPAN

THE BUFFET WORLD

36 new police officers report for duty today

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
n_rodriguez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Thirty-six new police officers will be reporting for duty beginning today after taking their oath of office at the Multi-Purpose Center yesterday in a ceremony that was capped by a power outage.

The 19th Police Cycle Academy graduates were led by class valedictorian Tarimai Joseph K. Yangetmai and Salutatorian Gabriel M. Manglona.

Aside from Yangetmai and Manglona, the eight other graduates who made it to the top 10 were Tito S. Hocog II, Perry K. Mesngon, NamHoon Norris Kwon, Herbert C. Borja, Vince T. Palacios, Roger V. Igisomar, Peter H. Palacios Jr. and Jasmine M. King.

Mesngon and Thelma Mizer were given the award for most physically fit while Kelani Vincent B. Pangalinan was the Top Gun and Shaw Clay Dlc. Taisacan was awarded with the Baby Pedro Memorial Award.

In a first for the Academy, cadets from the Federated States of Micronesia joined the new batch of police officers.

Supreme Court Justice Alejandro C. Castro administered the new officers' oath of office.

Before that, officer-in-charge POIII Frankie S. Pangalinan presented the class to the audience that included top government officials and the cadets' families.

In his opening remarks, Department of Public Safety Commissioner Santiago Tudela reminded the new police officers that the Academy was where they were trained to become professionals.

"With your graduation today, it signifies your dedication and determination to serve the public," Tudela said.

He told them that their training has given them necessary knowledge and skills to apply when enforcing and upholding the laws.

"However, always be reminded that what you learned in this training program only provides you with the basic knowledge. Performing your duty out in public will provide you with greater experience and real life situation," he said.

Tudela also thanked the families of the graduates for their untiring support and understanding while the cadets were undergoing the four-month rigorous training.

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, in his graduation address, congratulated the new officers, saying he is proud of their persistence and determination to successfully complete the grueling program.

"I appreciate the many physical and mental demands and challenges you encountered throughout this program and I commend you all for staying the course and making it through

the cycle," Fitial said.

He told the graduates that they are assets to the community and the community depends on them to uphold and enforce the law and protect the peace.

"Your community expects and trusts you to carry out your duties and uphold the highest standards of ethics and professionalism," he said.

The governor thanked DPS for its efforts to produce such fine graduates despite limited resources and in view of the personnel shortage suffered by the government due to the military deployment of many regular officers.

"I am confident that these new graduate will serve our community well," he said.

The governor was joined by other guests of honor, including Saipan Mayor Juan S. Tudela, Attorney General Gregory Baka, Labor Secretary Gilbert San Nicolas, Rota DPS resident director John Barcenas, Special Assistant for Administration Esther Fleming, and Public Auditor Michael Pai.

In his valedictory speech, Yangetmai said he is relieved that the cadets survived the long lectures, the sleepless nights of study and all the stressful tests and endured the intense physical training and the body aches that followed, as well as the pains of the survival course.

"We've been provided the knowledge, tools, trainings and advice that we need in order to do our jobs safely and effectively. But that does not mean that we've learned everything because there is a lot more to learn in this profession," he said.

The complete list of graduates are: **Saipan**—Nathan S. Bermudes, Sabino P. Cabrera, Jonathan Roland SN. Decena, Josef P. Deleon Guerrero, Rodolfo S. Hermosilla, Buddy S. Igitol, Antonio I. Kaipat, Jasmine M. King, NamHoon Norris Kwon, Joseph C. Muna, Ruby Jean C. Oxales, Vince T. Palacios, Keiani Vincent B. Pangalinan, Patrick P. Sablan, Alexander T. Sakisat, Arnold I. Sarapio, Maverick M. Saures, Carl K. Tudela, Jesus Jonathan K. Wabol, and Tarimai Josepk K. Yengetmai.

Tinian—Jason Jay N. Ayuyu, Herbert C. Borja, Kioni C. Cruz, Peter H. Palacios Jr., and Lepn I. Sanchez Jr.

Rota—Tito S. Hocog II, Gabriel M. Manglona, Perry K. Mesngon, and Shaw Clay Dlc. Taisacan.

Office of the Public Auditor—Thelma M. Mizer.

Attorney General Investigative Unit—Roger V. Igisomar.

Division of Labor—John Henry I. Igisomar.

Yap Police—Michael Defan, Kevin D. Lukagfinay, John V. Runpong, and Peter T. Tithinfal.



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Ongoing/Returning Student Registration:
January 26-27, 2009, 10 am to 6 pm in ABE Office.

New Student Registration:
January 28-29, 2009, 10 am to 6 pm in ABE Office.

Late Registration
January 30 - February 02, 2009, 9 am to 4 pm in ABE Office.

Student Orientation:
February 02, 2009, 5-6:30 pm in D-1

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Adult Basic Education Program
Spring 2009 Schedule

Adjunct Orientation:
CASAS Appraisal Test

January 16, 2009	F	06:00-07:30 PM	TBA
January 05-06 & 12-13, 2009	M-T	09:00-10:30 AM	K-1
		01:00-02:30 PM	K-1
		05:00-06:30 PM	K-1

CASAS Pre-Test

January 07-08 & 14-15, 2009	W-Th	09:00-10:30 AM	K-1
		01:00-02:30 PM	K-1
		05:00-06:30 PM	K-1

CASAS Post-Test
For Referred Returning Students

January 20-22, 2009	T-Th	09:00-10:30 AM	K-1
		01:00-02:30 PM	K-1
		05:00-06:30 PM	K-1

CASAS Make-Up Tests

January 20-22, 2009	T-Th	09:00-04:00 PM	K-2
Registration for Returning Students: January 26-27, 2009	M-T	10:00-06:00 PM	ABE

Registration for New Students:

January 28-29, 2009	W-Th	10:00-06:00 PM	ABE
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Late Registration:

January 30, February 02, 2009	F-M	09:00-04:00 PM	ABE
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Student Orientation:

February 02, 2009	M	05:00-06:30 PM	D-1
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Add/Drop for Students:

February 04-13, 2009		08:00-05:00 PM	ABE
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First Day of Instruction:

M W F Classes		February 04, 2009 (Wednesday)	
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T-Th Classes

Saturday Classes		February 05, 2009 (Thursday)	
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Last Day of Instruction:

Sunday Classes		February 07, 2009	
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May 01, 2009		February 08, 2009	
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This schedule is subject to change. For more information please contact the ABE Office at 234-5498 Ext. 1723 or 1724

This advertisement was paid for from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education.

Vladivostok Air charter flight is due on Sunday

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSISTANT EDITOR

The first of three trial charter flights of Vladivostok Air will arrive on Saipan at 3:40pm this Sunday, according to the Marianas Visitors Authority.

The flight, which is reportedly fully booked, will be greeted by MVA officials, with the passengers expected to receive shell leis and children getting Saipana backpacks.

MVA said the flight will bring

Fundraising concert for Ballesteros raises \$1.2K

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Close to 200 people from wide section of the CNMI community participated in Monday night's Saipan Pacific Winds' fundraising concert for the family of murdered security guard Effren Ballesteros.

The concert, which lasted two hours and a half at the Pacific Islands Club's Charley's Cabaret, raised over \$1,200 for the widow of Ballesteros and his two children on Saipan.

"It was absolutely amazing. It was a full house. Some people were seen giving twice the same night. The outpouring of community support was really overwhelming and it was great to see," according to Saipan Pacific Winds' conductor William DeWitt.

DeWitt said their goal was a thousand dollars, but they exceeded that by far.

"Everything that people gave was a free will offering," DeWitt told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday.

The Friends of the Arts gave \$250 cash, while PIC offered the Charley's Cabaret for free.

Court OKs disclosing informant

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
n_rodriguez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The federal court yesterday granted a motion by a man who had been indicted for yielding the second biggest haul of crystal meth in the CNMI to disclose the identity of the confidential informant in the case.

The defendant, Song Yong Ming, was represented by his lawyer, Joey P. San Nicolas, during the court hearing while Assistant U.S. Attorney James J. Benedetto appeared on behalf of the U.S. government.

U.S. District Judge Alex R. Munson said he ordered the granting of the motion after carefully reviewing the parties' briefs and the relevant legal authority and the benefit of oral argument and good cause.

The court said it should disclose the identity of its confidential informant by Wednesday,

tourists from Khabarovsk to Vladivostok where they will add more passengers and then fly directly to the Francisco C. Ada-Saipan International Airport.

The flights will be operated with state-of-the-art Tupolev TU204-300, a 166-seat aircraft.

While this Sunday's flight is fully booked, MVA said the mid-January 2009 charter is more than half full, and the third flight in late January also has a large number of bookings "by Russians wanting to come to the warm, tropical

isles of the Marianas."

Fiscal year-to-date numbers indicate that the Russian tourism market is up 86 percent from the same period a year ago—449 in October-November 2008 to 836 this fiscal year. Just last month, 456 visitors from the former Soviet Union arrived in the CNMI, compared to 261 in November 2007.

The CNMI, three hours travel from most cities in Japan, is served from Japan by Northwest Airlines. From Korea, Asiana Airlines provides daily direct flights from Seoul and four times a week from Busan.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Garapan Headstart held a Christmas program yesterday and was visited by "Santa Claus." Photo above shows a scene from the children's rendition of the "First Christmas."

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Judge denies Rota mayor's son's request to post bail

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
n_rodriguez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

US District Court Judge Alex Munson has denied a motion for bail modification filed by Wilbur Vic Masga Inos, who is accused of two federal offenses on Rota.

Inos, the son of the Rota Mayor and Joseph S. Inos, appeared with court-appointed counsel Robert Torres during a hearing yesterday. Assistant U.S. Attorney James Benedetto represented the U.S. government.

Torres urged the court to al-

low the defendant to post bail, presenting Lucinda Santos Inos, the defendant's stepmother, as a witness. Torres argued that the defendant be released with the condition of a third party custodian and electronic monitoring.

The government opposed this, pushing for no bail.

Munson remanded the defendant back into the custody of the U.S. Marshal.

Inos was arrested on Dec. 18 and was charged with one count of Hobbs Act robbery and one count of use of a firearm in the

commission of a violent crime.

Inos pleaded not guilty. The court accepted the plea and set the jury trial on Feb. 17.

The court found no conditions of release appropriate at this time and detained the defendant until further order.

A report of a third party custodian, Rossanna Villagomez-Aguon, chief U.S. Probation officer, was submitted to Munson yesterday.

The report said that Lucinda Santos Inos is an appropriate third-party custodian for the defendant, with the exception

that, if electronic monitoring is required for his release, her telephone subscription should be cleared of any special features.

The report said that "the fact that she is currently employed by the Rota Mayor's Office and that she may have to return to her job sometime in the course of the defendant's release, may change her status as third-party custodian."

The report also mentioned that the defendant is on release pending jury trial in a local criminal case in the Superior Court, where Mrs. Inos was appointed third party custodian.

"In light of the fact that the defendant's brother also presents himself as alternate and temporary third-party custodian, this officer submits that such arrangement might be problematic given Mr. Inos' report that he can serve only as custodian part-time," the probation officer said in her report.

Hazardous seas seen on Christmas Day

Fresh trade winds are expected through Thursday and seas will remain hazardous through Christmas Day, according to a notice issued yesterday by the CNMI Emergency Management Office.

The advisory said that an easterly swell is combin-

ing with waves to bring seas above 10 feet. "Surf heights will increase along eastern exposure on Wednesday," EMO said.

Small craft advisory for hazardous seas remains in effect through Thursday afternoon. "Boaters should exercise caution when

entering harbors, especially along east facing exposures."

The public is urged to avoid venturing near reefs and exposed beaches as winds and waves conditions support dangerous rip currents. Rip currents are life threatening to anyone entering the water. (EMO)

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TOTAL	\$ 4,850.00

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Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

December 24, 1998

Panel weighs green card

The Economic Recovery and Revitalization Task Force eyes the possibility of granting residency to businessmen as a way of attracting investors to the CNMI, a plan patterned after Guam which has made the neighboring island an investment hub in the region. Such proposal is among the recommendations initially outlined by the task force as come-on to investors, whose presence in the Northern Marianas have thinned since the implementation of stringent business requirements early last year. Potential investors frowned at a law requiring them to put up a \$100,000 security bond on top of \$150,000 in actual assets, which was designed to curb the proliferation of mom-and-pop-type of investments.

Villanueva optimistic of economic recovery

Newly-appointed Commerce Secretary Frankie Villanueva yesterday said he is optimistic that the Northern Marianas will be able to hurdle the effects of Asia's financial crisis because the island offers many economic advantages different from the rest of the countries in the region. However, he said the recovery of the island depends primarily on the improvement of the economic situation in Asia, specifically, Japan. He noted that the strengthening of the yen against the U.S. dollar is a positive sign since it will allow more Japanese tourists to travel to the CNMI. "We have enjoyed a period of 10 to 15 years of uninterrupted economic growth. However, we must understand that economic slowdown is part of an ordinary economic cycle in any country. What we need most at this moment is the confidence in knowing that the economy will eventually turn around," said Villanueva.

December 24, 1999

CDA: Don't alter \$50-M CIP plan

Commonwealth Development Authority Board Chairman John S. Tenorio yesterday warned the Senate against changing the original plan on the \$50.8 million capital improvement projects, saying this would only jeopardize their implementation. He said the proposal by senators to borrow additional \$10 million from Bank of Guam on top of the \$30 million loan initially secured by the government will delay use of the funds as it will mean months of processing by the bank. "There will be problems by raising the amount of the loan because this is an interim financing and we have placed everything to our underwriters and bond counsels as well as to Bank of Guam to utilize the \$30 million," Mr. Tenorio told in an interview.

DPS nabs kidnapping suspect

Police authorities yesterday arrested Pedro Tudela Borja for allegedly kidnapping and robbing a Bangladeshi national last Dec. 18 in Chalan Kanoa. The Department of Public Safety is also conducting a manhunt for Miah Jahangir, another Bangladeshi, and three more unidentified male suspects who were with Mr. Borja when they forcibly took victim Motahar Hussain across the post office in Chalan Kanoa. According to police reports, Mr. Motahar, an employee of Michigan Garment, was watching TV at a friend's room when the suspects arrived.

December 24, 2002

A Christmas without rebates?

It appears that the \$19-million loan agreement meant to pay off overdue tax rebates/refunds may not be sealed in time to have the checks ready for Christmas Day as earlier hoped. This, as the administration—as of yesterday—was still locked in negotiations with the Bank of Guam. Gov. Juan N. Babauta reportedly said last night that the negotiating parties were trying to work out some conditions in the loan agreement. The local chief executive and Attorney General Ramona V. Manglona reportedly communicated with the Guam-based counsel of Bank of Guam via telephone yesterday.

JAL Group brings in more tourists

The Commonwealth Ports Authority disclosed yesterday that Japan Airlines and its sister company, JALWays, have increased their passenger load this holiday season as the airline company switched from DC10 airplanes to Boeing 747s. CPA Executive Director Carlos H. Salas said the change have brought in more than 100 additional passengers from Japan for each flight. Besides the aircraft switch, the holiday season also contributed to the increased incoming traffic, Salas said, as well as the flights that were diverted from Guam to Saipan.

 COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Live-fire training on Farallon

The U.S. military will be conducting live fire training on the island of Farallon de Mendenilla on Dec. 29-31, 2008, from 6am to 11:30pm, and on Jan. 1, 2009, from 12am to 12:30am.

The general location of this activity will be on the island Farallon de Mendenilla training area (R7201) on 10 nautical mile radius on all quadrants.

Due to the danger imposed by this activity, the Emergency Management Office is advising the public—especially fishermen, commercial pilots and marine tour operators—to stay away from this area during the time and dates indicated.

For more information, contact the EMO Operations Section at 322-9528 and 322-9529, VHF MARINE CHNL and Single Side Band Radio on 5.205.0.

Distribution of 2008 W-2CM forms

The Division of Revenue and Taxation wishes to inform all CNMI employers that the distribution of the 2008 W-2CM forms and instructions will begin on Friday, Jan. 2, 2009, from 8am to 4pm at the Office of Division of Revenue and Taxation located at the Dandan Commercial Center.

All business and employers are asked to pick up the forms during regular business hours beginning Jan. 2, 2009. The deadline for filing the 2008 W-2CM form is Friday, Feb. 27, 2009 at 4:30pm. (PR)

DEQ brigade sets cleanup

The Division of Environmental Quality cleanup brigade will be picking up trash at San Antonio Beach in San Antonio, south of Pacific Islands Club, on Saturday, Jan. 3, 2009 at 8am. Volunteers will clean until 10am and break for drinks and then continue, if needed.

Brigade volunteers who participated in at least 10 cleanups will receive a brigade cap and those who participated in at least three will receive a green brigade t-shirt.

For more information about volunteering, contact DEQ at 664-8500. (PR)

Kagman High calendar of activities

Dec. 24 2008 to Jan. 4 2009: Christmas break

Jan. 5 2009: Classes resume

Vendors sought for Puengin Inetnon

The Kagman Komunitat Association is looking for interested vendors to sell food, clothing, games, and other types of family oriented entertainment for "Puengin Inetnon."

"Puengin Inetnon" is Chamorro for "a night of gathering."

It will be similar to the Thursday Night Street Market in Garapan except that it will be held every government payday Friday at the Kagman Community Center. Interested vendors, volunteers, and performers may call the Kagman Post Office at 256-POST for more info. (PR)

RP resets overseas absentee voters registration/certification

The Philippine Consulate General would like to inform all the Filipinos in the CNMI that as per Resolution No. 8556, the Philippine Commission on Elections has reset the registration/certification of overseas absentee voters from Dec. 1, 2008 to Feb. 1, 2009, ending on Aug. 31, 2009. All qualified Filipino voters are urged to register as overseas voters or to update their records (if they have previously voted in the Philippines) to enable them to vote during the 2010 Philippine presidential elections. (PR)

FHB employees pledge record \$578K to benefit 36 charities

HONOLULU, Hawaii—Responding to their workplace charitable giving campaign, First Hawaiian Bank employees pledged a record \$578,840 to benefit 36 local charities in Hawaii, Guam and Saipan, according to an announcement today by First Hawaiian Bank president and chief executive officer Don Horner.

First Hawaiian's annual em-

ployee charitable giving campaign is called Kokua Ma'i which in Hawaiian means "to help others." The campaign is administered by the bank and 100 percent of the donations go directly to the charities. Nine out of every 10 bank employees participated in the effort.

"This year we celebrated our bank's 150th anniversary and honored the giving tradition

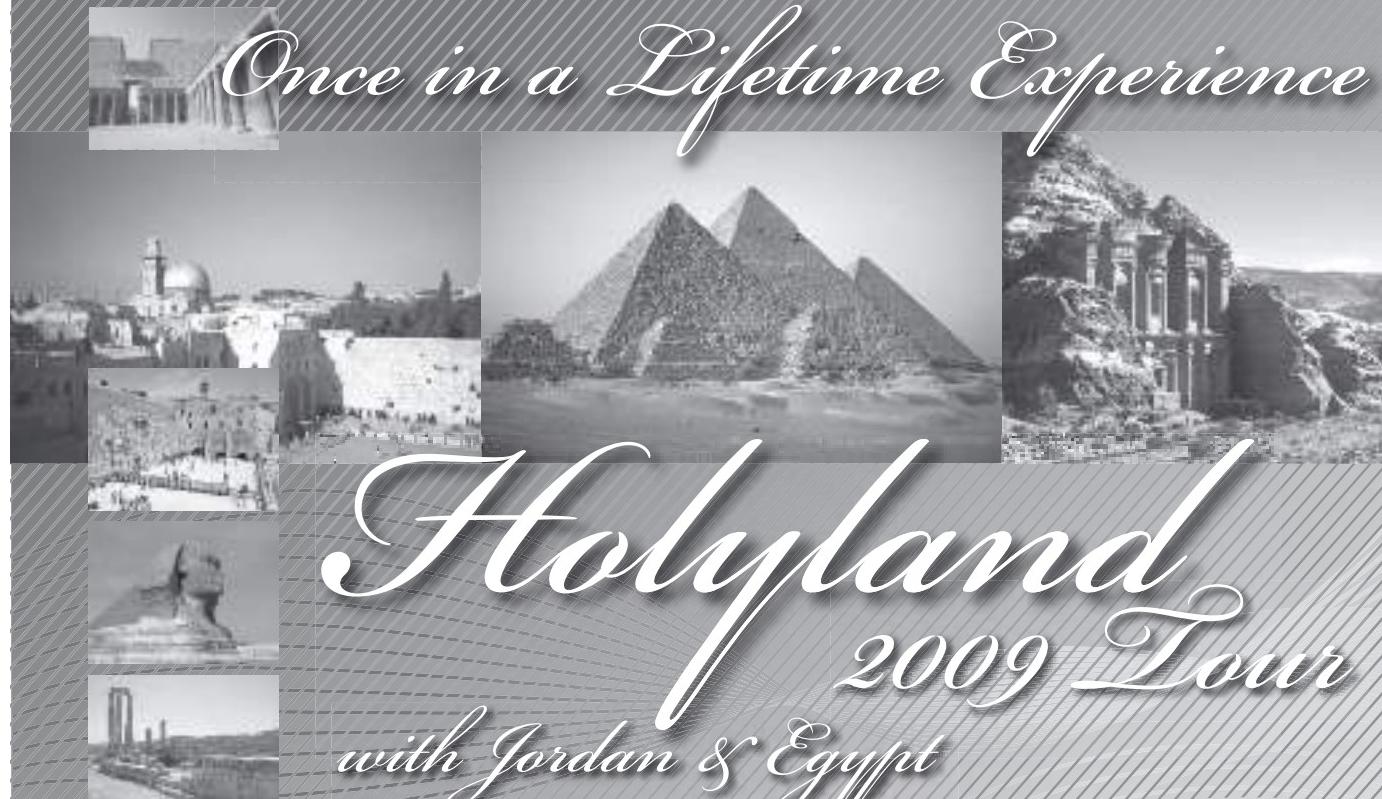
started by our founder Charles Reed Bishop. I am very proud of our employees. The level of participation by the First Hawaiian Ohana during these economic times is a strong expression of the Aloha that the employees have for their communities," Horner said.

First Hawaiian Bank and its Foundation is the largest corporate contributor to non-

profits in Hawaii. In 2007, the Foundation contributed over \$3.5 million to benefit 350 charities throughout Hawaii, Guam and Saipan.

First Hawaiian Bank (www.fhb.com) with \$12.5 billion in assets is Hawaii's oldest and largest bank. Today the bank has 58 branches in Hawaii, three on Guam and two on Saipan. (FHB)

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Opinion

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EDITORIAL

The stimulus package

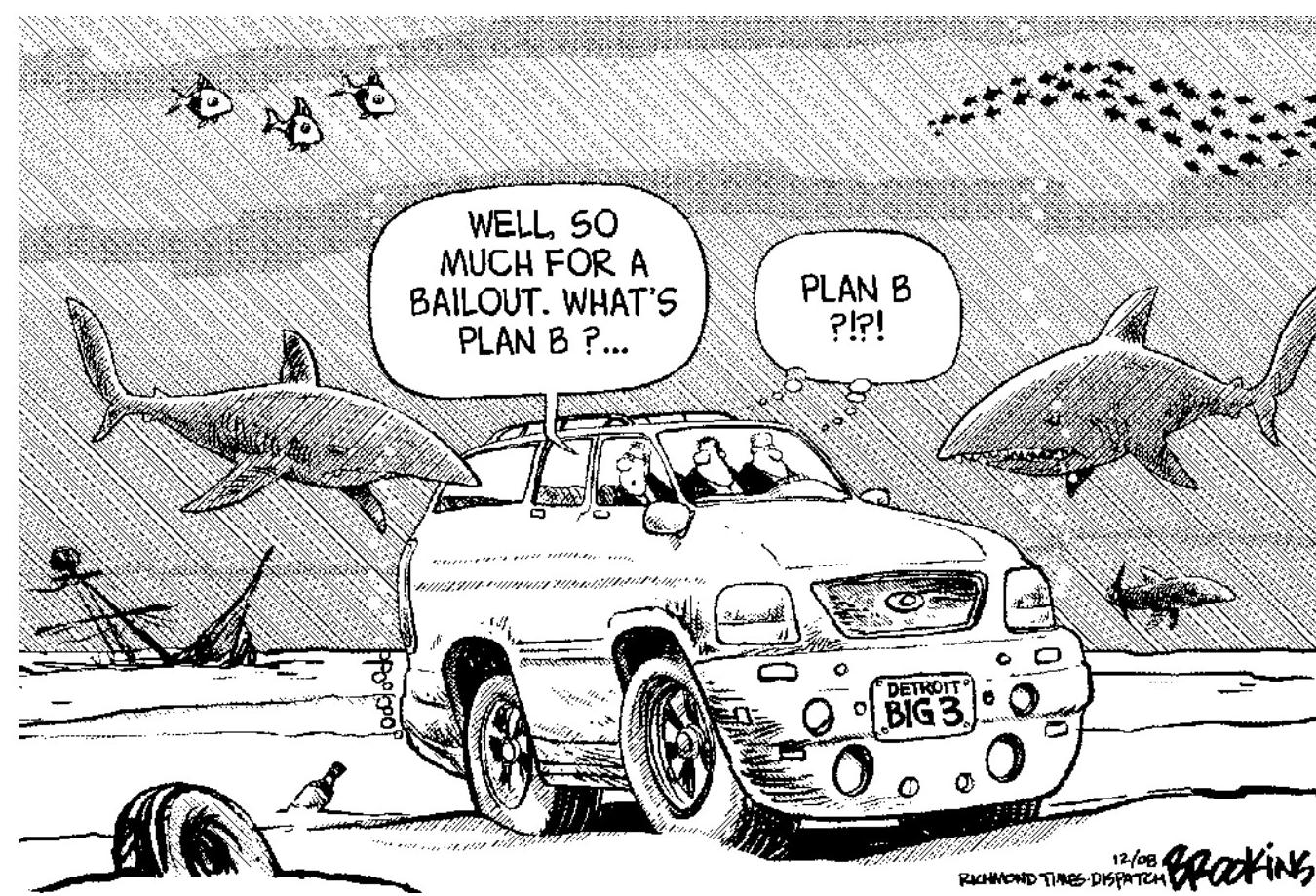
We're happy to see that the shroud of secrecy surrounding the formulation of an economic stimulus plan by President-elect Barack Obama is lifting, albeit through leaks. Since his advisers met with congressional leaders last week, details from the Capitol Hill briefing have trickled out that are bringing the impending stimulus package into focus. Yet concern about transparency has given way to concern that the economic crisis will be used as an excuse to throw sacks of cash at projects instead of leading to the development of discrete proposals that pack a lot of punch in the short term. That Mr. Obama is reportedly prepared for his plan to rise from as little as \$670 billion to as much as \$850 billion because of additions from Congress only reinforces that fear.

"We're not intending to spend money lightly," Mr. Obama said Friday while refusing to put a firm price tag on his stimulus package, the goal of which is to create or preserve at least 3 million jobs over the next two years. That may be, but we've seen this before. In fact, it was in late September, when the financial rescue plan, billed as desperately needed for the economy's survival, was larded up with unrelated measures that couldn't pass on their own. With every constituency that has gone begging for federal money for years now developing wish lists for Washington to consider, it could happen again. It mustn't. We agree with Alice Rivlin, budget director under President Clinton, that the best way to ensure this is for Mr. Obama to pursue a smaller package that would inject cash into the economy almost immediately.

Much of what Ms. Rivlin proposes appears to be in the larger plan Mr. Obama's economic advisers presented to Congress last week. It includes increased money for food stamps, bigger block grants to states (in addition to an increase in the Medicaid match they receive from the federal government) and funding for "shovel-ready" infrastructure projects. There would be a reduction in withholding for income or payroll taxes, and unemployment benefits would be extended. Together these measures would put money in the hands of struggling families. They will make it cheaper for employers to hire people. And they will give states the assist they need to balance exploding budget deficits while completing overdue infrastructure repairs. An encouraging proviso on the federal money for states is a "use it or lose it" clause that could make local governments more accountable and hasten the completion of the intended task.

In no way are we advocating that Mr. Obama abandon his larger plans for transportation and infrastructure, digitizing medical records, school construction and repairs, and energy efficiency. But as Ms. Rivlin told us, there shouldn't be a "huge commitment to long-term building without a well-scrubbed long-term plan. What do we really need to spend the money on?" That kind of plan and the discussion it should entail should not be rushed through in the next two months. Mr. Obama has said that the economic crisis provides the nation with an opportunity to transform its economy. If it's not done right, it will have been an opportunity wasted.

(c) 2008, The Washington Post



The case for self-publishing, Walt's way!

The only way to take control of your life, raise your standard of living and move beyond merely surviving is to create your own unique product or service that you offer to increasing numbers of people in exchange for the things of value that you desire. This simple formula applies to countries as well as people. A self-sufficient economy has its own products or services of value to export to the world. Similarly, a self-sufficient individual has something of value to exchange in the global marketplace. That thing of value is based on your natural talent, skill, or interest—in other words, your passion!

So yesterday, I shared with a few friends news of a soon-to-be self-published book I've been working on for the past year. I received several positive responses including one which read, "you could probably actually get a real book deal for this one." That person later added, "it could be bigger than just putting it on your little website."

I chuckled to myself as I typed my response (which follows), acting on what I jokingly refer to as "my fiduciary responsibility to dispel the misconceptions surrounding self-publishing and the mythical 'book deal.'"

"Ahhh, yes," I began in an admittedly haughty tone. "The much-hyped, much sought-after 'book deal.' Contrary to popular opinion, a 'real book deal' is not always the prize people believe it is, my friend," I wrote.

"As you know, I've self-published all [12] of my books as well as those I've co-written or ghost-written for others. In other words, I am my own publishing company. I use a printing company to print the books, but there's no other entity involved; no agents, no editors, no publishers, no other 'big company' that I am signed to. I do it all myself. As such, I typically earn more money than many authors who've gotten a 'real' book deal from a major publisher (think Random House, Harper Collins, Simon and Schuster, et al.) How can that be, you may be thinking. Well, for starters, as a self-published author:

I deal directly with online sellers like Amazon.com who sell my books, so I keep all the money.

I deal directly with brick and mortar retailers like Barnes & Noble and Borders who sell my books, so I keep all the money.

I deal directly with major wholesalers like Baker & Taylor and Ingram who sell my books, so, I keep all the money.

I deal directly with the buying public who order by phone, or through my websites, so (all together now) I keep all the money!

In other words, anyone, anywhere in the world who wants a copy of my book has to deal directly with me.

Now, don't get me wrong. There have been real success stories of people with lots of talent, a winning manuscript, a great agent and a committed publishing company who've done quite well. Six fig-

THE SAIPANPRENEUR PROJECT

*Creating economic success for the CNMI*By WALT F.J. GOODRIDGE
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Send article suggestions, entrepreneur nominations and feedback about this article to walt@passionprofit.com.

ure book deals, Oprah appearances and *New York Times* bestseller status are the stuff writers' dreams are made of, and they do happen. However, they're not available to everybody. But, the great thing is, even *without* a lot of talent, a not-so-great manuscript, no agent and no publishing company behind you, you can make money—even make a living—as a self-published author. Trust me, I know.

Unfortunately, many of my fellow writers (and I've met a few), who've made the "mistake" of going the real book deal route, lose out in several ways.

1. First, they get paid anywhere from 5 percent to 15 percent of the book's cover price as their royalty, that is, if they get anything at all, since the publishing company must recoup their expenses—including any advances paid to the author—before the author gets paid. As a result, though I may sell less books, I earn more money overall than they do. (They also get paid quarterly, or sometimes even just twice a year.)

2. They often lose control of the copyright of their work if they're not careful about the contract they sign. In addition, they may be restricted from writing any books that, in the publisher's opinion, may compete with the book they've signed away.

3. They end up having to do promotion themselves since a publishing company's budget is allocated based on the popularity of the author. Stephen King gets the big promotion bucks. Walt Goodridge (who?) gets the dregs. So without proper promotion, the book languishes in the warehouse, or on a shelf in the publisher's office awaiting release. In addition, the author has to purchase copies from the publisher in order to sell them on his/her own, and may be restricted in how they can sell them.

4. They don't develop a direct line of communication with their public, so are not able to capitalize optimally on follow-up sales or future publications.

I could go on, but the bottom line is that the book deal is designed by the publisher, to make the publisher wealthy first.

Many of the people who see the "book deal" as their savior are

See THESE on Next Page

EDITORIAL POLICY

The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, Century Insurance Building, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Open letter concerning the Retirement Fund

*Sen. Pete P. Reyes
President of the Senate*

I refer to the article in the Dec. 23 edition of the *Saipan Tribune* titled: "In Case The Retirement Fund Goes Bankrupt" in which you were quoted regarding several points concerning the condition of the Fund. Assuming you have been quoted accurately, I know I can speak for all retirees who agree with me that your concern over the deteriorating condition of the Fund's remaining financial base is very much appreciated.

Your professed search for a solution and willingness to work with Fund trustees is refreshing and a welcome step in the right direction. I note that several legislators have indicated their belief that the solution to keeping the Fund solvent is through revenue bond financing. Under normal conditions—during normal times—this approach may have indeed been possible but in my judgment, and in consideration of the realities of the current situation with the economies of the United States and that of the world, I do not think it is realistic to believe that such bond financing for the NMI is viable within the foreseeable future for this particular purpose.

T'was the Night before Christmas, Saipan Edition

T'was the night before Christmas, when all through Saipan,
Not a single light turned on, not even a fan.
The night was so dark that you just could not see,
Just another power outage, thanks to Uncle Ben and CUC.

The children were perspiring profusely in their beds,
While us parents spent hours fanning their sweaty little heads.
And mamma was wondering what happened this time,
"Why the power outages?" she said. "Aggreko's online."

When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from the bed to see what's the matter.
Away to the window I looked far and near,
Some silhouettes of strangers had suddenly appeared.

Some young boys, maybe teens, breaking in to our neighbors' home,
I had to do something so I picked up the phone.
I knew at that moment what had to be done,
So I did the right thing and dialed 911.

The neighbors on vacation, this morning they left,
I'm sure they never thought they'd be victims of theft.
The police responded quickly and arrested the teens,
But with lenient judges they'll be released by the spring.

With the power still off, we lit up a candle,

My reason for holding such an opinion is the CNMI's poor credit reputation. This is in part a result of the neglect of the government's legal contractual responsibilities of both past and present government administrations and the impact this has had on the government's reputation as a credit risk. I can't imagine who would want to purchase NMI government bonds at this time. But don't take my word for it—check it out with some of the well known bond rating agencies or the Fund's own contacts in the financial market.

I expressed my opinion on this matter in detail two months ago in an article in the *Tribune* on Oct. 24 titled: "What's the Possibility of Bond Financing for the Fund?" This article can be accessed through the *Tribune*'s online archives.

As far as the economy of the United States and the world is concerned we are quite close to an almost total paralysis within which few are likely to be immune. The inter-bank (lending) market is not functioning and banks are not lending. This is generating vicious cycles. Consumers are not consuming, businesses are not taking on additional workers, investors are not investing. The NMI is not

alone in this bleak process.

That's why I believe it is essential to develop a contingency plan NOW.

I urge you to communicate with your counterparts in every state senate in the United States to convene a meeting to discuss methods to cushion the adverse impact of a near nationwide potential "pension meltdown"—perhaps with federal intervention. With all the respective state senate presidents there is strength in numbers, something the retirees will no doubt soon realize.

Meanwhile senator, talk about floating a revenue bond to bail out the central government from the situation it created by not meeting its previous financial obligations to the Fund and its loyal retirees is just that—"talk." To continue to hold out the possibility of such relief creates false hope among those dependent upon their pensions for their livelihood. I suggest you and others in the Legislature look elsewhere for a solution.

William H. "Bill" Stewart
via e-mail

While using precious local funds to sue the U.S.,
He seems to have forgotten our students at PSS.

One thing you must know, and I swear this is true,
If it were not for federal funds they would have closed down
our schools.

Let's always remember that education holds the key,
To a better life filled with opportunities and prosperity.

Our people clamor for change, but are they willing and able?
To elect honest leaders who won't deliver tents and tables?
Is change really possible? Can we do it in '09?
Or will be subjected to more *bitter times*?

And wouldn't you know it? The power just came on.
Not a moment too soon at the crack of dawn.
Yes, there are fewer gifts under our small Christmas tree,
But that matters little to a loving family.

Our children will wake soon and greet us with joy,
And open their presents and play with their toys.
What problems we have are forgotten for this day,
Felis Pasqua to all, and to all Hafa Adai!

Ed Propst
Dandan, Saipan

know unless and until you try. Other business ideas that come to mind that can be leveraged by an online presence are translation services, consulting and graphic design.

I've learned, over the years, that the biggest obstacle to people pursuing their passion is simply their level of belief. Some people will never believe it can be done, no matter how much evidence is presented. I've had other people—writers, in fact—challenge me to my face saying they don't believe that what I say is true. (What they're actually saying is, they don't believe it is possible for *them*.) So, they remain in jobs they probably despise, while living frustrated in the pursuit of their passion. Yes, some will say it can't be done. I would ask those people to kindly step aside and get out of the way for those of us who are actually doing it. And the next time you see me sitting on the beach at Memorial Park in the middle of the day watching the waves, or pass me on the hike down to Forbidden Island giving tourists and residents alike my own private tour of the island, give me a shout, and if I'm not too busy, I'll share some of my secrets.

And remember, just because you don't personally know anyone who is doing it, doesn't mean it's not being done. You've simply not yet met anyone who is doing it....Walt's way!

Note: For more tips on overcoming your fears, acting on your ideas, changing the game, and creating a passion-centered lifestyle, visit www.passionprofit.com!

Until next week, remember, success is a journey, not a destination!

Walt F.J. Goodridge is author of 12 books including Turn Your Passion Into Profit. Walt offers coaching and workshops to help people pursue and profit from their passions. Originally from the island of Jamaica, Walt has grown several successful businesses in the US, and now makes his home here in Saipan. To learn more about the Saipanpreneur Project and Walt's philosophy and formula visit www.saipanpreneur.com and www.passionprofit.com.

THESE

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simply not (or, more accurately don't believe they are) creative enough to craft a marketing campaign that works, not industrious enough to want to fulfill orders directly, not committed enough to persist during the lean years, or may simply suffer from the "employee mentality" where they believe big bucks can only come from a father-figure/overseer-type company that somehow knows more than they do, or who can do a better job. They somehow feel they need the validation of a publisher in order to believe their work can sell.

I, on the other hand, write books, edit them myself, design the covers, craft marketing campaigns, develop websites, optimize their search engine ranking, write press releases, arrange appearances and interviews, do the fulfillment and thus reap the reward of freedom and control that many of the my author peers never realize. (Don't fret, once the initial setup work is done, a lot of it can be a turnkey, hands-off operation.)

Also, even though the site for this book project has not even been publicized, I've already been making sales. People have been finding the site on their own, and pre-ordering (yes, paying *real* money) based on the promise of what's to come. That's another advantage of doing things the way I do: I can often generate money way before the thing is even complete, and earn while I do my "market research."

So here's how it works:

I create or find a product that I think people might be interested in and that can actually sell. I launch a website, market it effectively and wait.

With a bit of smarts, the right timing, and a bit of luck, people visit my website and place their orders. If they order the e-book or MP3 (digital audio) version of my product, my shopping cart (from cubecart.com) automatically fulfills the order and they can down-

load the files right away. If they wish a paperback copy, I access my account with a print-on-demand company to print a single copy of the book, and I instruct them to send it directly to the customer. I never have to leave my perch on the beach where I secretly have access to a hotel's wireless signal.

Not all of my sites earn money, of course. Some have earned absolutely nothing over the years they've been up. Others earn a few dollars, some earn hundreds, even thousands of dollars each month. One of my more popular sites can earn me as much as \$5,000 per month (not all the time, but seasonally). Sites I've created for people right here on Saipan have earned from \$0 (again, not all are winners) to \$900 a month. It's all a function of how much time and energy you're willing to devote to growing it.

The twin goals for me are control and freedom, though not necessarily in that order. Sites like my "little website," as you put it, (big smile, no offense taken) have been affording me that since 1995. *[thus ended my response]*

You Can Too!

So, what's my point, beyond the obvious bit of ego-stroking sparked by my friend's e-mail? The point is, opportunity abounds for unique, home-based streams of income that just about anyone can take advantage of. And, even living on a tiny Pacific island, with a slowing economy, 1,000 miles from the nearest large landmass, is still no excuse for not venturing online to see if you can be one of the few and proud. All you need is a unique story to tell, a passion to share, or something to teach, and you might have a shot.

A book about your experience as an expat on Saipan, perhaps; a video demonstrating the finer art of night-spear-fishing on Tinian; an audio CD singing or teaching traditional Carolinian folk songs—ideas like this, provided they touch a chord with the right buying demographic, can generate income for you—and if you sell your products as e-books and MP3s, you may not even have to create, print or duplicate anything physical. I can't predict how much you can earn, of course, but you'll never

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.pr.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Mostly sunny and breezy with isolated showers.

▲87° ▾78°

▲87° ▾77°

▲87° ▾77°

▲87° ▾78°

▲87° ▾78°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Showers	▲85 ▾76
Palau	Showers	▲87 ▾78
Yap	Showers	▲88 ▾77
Chuuk	Showers	▲89 ▾78
Pohnpei	Showers	▲86 ▾76
Kosrae	Showers	▲89 ▾77
Majuro	Showers	▲83 ▾75

Around The Globe

Auckland	Showers	▲67 ▾59
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	▲36 ▾18
Hong Kong	Sunny	▲73 ▾64
Honolulu	Showers	▲79 ▾71
London	Cloudy	▲48 ▾41
Los Angeles	Rain	▲58 ▾46
Manila	Cloudy	▲87 ▾75
Melbourne	Sunny	▲83 ▾62
Miami	Cloudy	▲79 ▾69
New York	Rain	▲48 ▾42
Osaka	Sunny	▲49 ▾38
Paris	Sunny	▲46 ▾35
Pusan	Sunny	▲49 ▾27
Rome	Mostly Cloudy	▲51 ▾31
Salem	Snow	▲40 ▾36
San Francisco	Rain	▲53 ▾45
Seoul	Mostly Cloudy	▲39 ▾14
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	▲50 ▾38
Washington, DC	Rain	▲54 ▾45

Tides

Saipan Harbor	
7:08AM Today	High Tide: 1.7 Feet
11:44AM Today	Low Tide: 1.4 Feet
4:33PM Today	High Tide: 1.8 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:40AM	5:53 PM	Today	3:43AM	3:10 PM
Thursday	6:40AM	5:54 PM	Thursday	4:35AM	3:57 PM
Friday	6:41AM	5:55 PM	Friday	5:27AM	4:46 PM
Saturday	6:41AM	5:55 PM	Saturday	6:18AM	5:38 PM
Sunday	6:42AM	5:56 PM	Sunday	7:07AM	6:30 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	3:43AM	3:10 PM	Thursday	4:35AM	3:57 PM
Thursday	4:35AM	3:57 PM	Friday	5:27AM	4:46 PM
Friday	5:27AM	4:46 PM	Saturday	6:18AM	5:38 PM
Saturday	6:18AM	5:38 PM	Sunday	7:07AM	6:30 PM
Sunday	7:07AM	6:30 PM			

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

■ ISLAND SNAPSHTOS Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.

■ BIRTHDAY GREETINGS A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.

■ BUSINESS Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.

■ SAMUT SARI Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.

■ TRAVELOGUE Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

■ COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.

■ CAMPUS BULLETIN Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when),

the name of contact person, and a phone number.

- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

■ E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com.

■ Fax: (670) 235-3740

■ Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950

■ Drop off: 2nd Floor, CIC Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan

To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

POLICY

■ The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to accept or reject a contribution for publication; the right to edit all contributions, the date of publication, size of the picture, and page placement; and the right to publish contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats.

■ The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.

- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.



Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235-3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website: www.saipantribune.com.

CUSTOMER SERVICE For inquiries, purchase of back issues and complaints, call (670) 235-8747, 235-2440, fax 235-3740.

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ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 20, 2008

DEPARTURES

Saipan-Rota

CO9597 11:50am 12:25pm 1,7

Saipan-Guam

CO9317 5:00am 5:50am Daily
CO9313 8:30am 9:20am Daily
CO9597 11:50am 1:20pm 1,7 via Rota

Saipan-Narita

NW 099 5:00am 7:40am Daily

NW 078 8:25am 1:30pm Daily

NW 075 4:55pm 7:30pm Daily

Saipan-Osaka

OZ 119 4:00am 6:40am 1,4,6
NW 083 4:30pm 7:20pm Daily

Saipan-Nagoya

NW 078 8:25am 11:05am Daily

Saipan-Incheon

OZ 604 2:10am 6:00am 1
OZ 604 2:40am 6:30am 2,3,4,5,6,7
OZ 606 3:20pm 7:00pm Daily

Saipan-Busan

OZ 608 3:50am 7:20am 1,4,5,7

Saipan-Shanghai

FM 844 2:50am 5:40am 2,6

Rota-Guam

CO 9597 12:50pm 1:20pm 1,7

Guam-Manila

CO 893 5:50pm 9:10pm 3,5 via Koror
CO 933 8:00pm 9:40pm Daily
PR 111 6:00am 7:50am 1,2,4,6,7

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; NW: Northwest; OZ: Asiania
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The *Saipan Tribune* is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency	Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency

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Business

Where'd the bailout money go? Shhhh, it's a secret

By MATT APUZZO
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

WASHINGTON (AP)—It's something any bank would demand to know before handing out a loan: Where's the money going? But after receiving billions in aid from U.S. taxpayers, the nation's largest banks say they can't track exactly how they're spending the money or they simply refuse to discuss it.

"We've lent some of it. We've not lent some of it. We've not given any accounting of, 'Here's how we're doing it,'" said Thomas Kelly, a spokesman for JPMorgan Chase, which received \$25 billion in emergency bailout money. "We have not disclosed that to the public. We're declining to."

The Associated Press contacted 21 banks that received at least \$1 billion in government money and asked four questions: How much has been spent? What was it spent on? How much is being held in savings, and what's the plan for the rest?

None of the banks provided specific answers.

"We're not providing dollar-in, dollar-out tracking," said Barry Kolling, a spokesman for Atlanta, Ga.-based SunTrust Banks Inc., which got \$3.5 billion in taxpayer dollars.

Some banks said they simply didn't know where the money was going.

"We manage our capital in its aggregate," said Regions Financial

BoH declines to participate in US treasury capital purchase program

HONOLULU, Hawaii—Bank of Hawaii Corporation yesterday announced that the company does not plan to participate in the Treasury's Capital Purchase Program. The program is part of the federal government's Troubled Assets Relief Program approved by Congress to strengthen the banking system by providing banks with additional capital to increase lending capabilities.

"After careful consideration by management and our Board of Direc-

More companies lining up for piece of bailout fund

WASHINGTON (AP)—A trio of reports due Tuesday are expected to paint a bleak picture of the nation's housing market and the broader economy, as the deepening recession sends more companies lining up for a piece of the government's \$700 billion bailout fund.

Wall Street expects the gross domestic product, the country's total output of goods and services, fell at an annual rate of 0.5 percent in the July-September quarter. That would match the estimate for GDP made a month ago, but economists believe that small drop will be followed by a much larger plunge in the current October-December quarter.

The National Association of Realtors is expected to report that sales of existing homes in the U.S. for November fell 1.6 percent to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 4.9 million units, according to the median forecast of economists surveyed by Thomson Reuters.

Corp. spokesman Tim Deighton, who said the Birmingham, Ala.-based company is not tracking how it is spending the \$3.5 billion it received as part of the financial bailout.

The answers highlight the secrecy

And new home sales data from the Commerce Department are expected to dip 3 percent to 420,000 units in November. October's new home sales were the lowest in nearly 18 years.

Builders such as Centex Corp., Pulte Homes Inc. and Hovnanian Enterprises Inc. have been caught with a glut of unsold properties over the past year as mortgages became harder to get and sales slowed. Developers have slashed prices, but many buyers remain on the sidelines, waiting and watching for bigger discounts.

Barney Frank, chairman of the House Financial Services Committee, said Monday he is preparing legislation to require that some of the bailout money be spent for specific purposes, such as stemming foreclosures and reducing mortgage rates. Frank is pushing to get the second half of the \$700 billion rescue fund released next month, before President-elect Barack Obama is inaugurated.

surrounding the Troubled Assets Relief Program, which earmarked \$700 billion—about the size of the Netherlands' economy—to help rescue the financial industry. The Treasury Department has been using the money

surrounding the Troubled Assets Relief Program, which earmarked \$700 billion—about the size of the Netherlands' economy—to help rescue the financial industry. The Treasury Department has been using the money

to buy stock in U.S. banks, hoping that the sudden inflow of cash will get banks to start lending money.

There has been no accounting of how banks spend that money. Lawmakers summoned bank executives to Capitol Hill last month and implored them to lend the money—not to hoard it or spend it on corporate bonuses, junkets or to buy other banks. But there is no process in place to make sure that's happening and there are no consequences for banks who don't comply.

"It is entirely appropriate for the American people to know how their taxpayer dollars are being spent in private industry," said Elizabeth Warren, the top congressional watchdog overseeing the financial bailout.

But, at least for now, there's no way for taxpayers to find that out.

Pressured by the Bush administration to approve the money quickly, Congress attached nearly no strings on the \$700 billion bailout in October. And the Treasury Department, which doles out the money, never asked banks how it would be spent.

"Those are legitimate questions that should have been asked on Day One," said Rep. Scott Garrett, R-N.J., a House Financial Services Committee member who opposed the bailout as it was rushed through Congress. "Where is the money going to go to? How is it going to be spent? When are we going to get a record on it?"

This news release contains "forward-looking statements" such as expectations for our operations and business prospects. Actual results might differ significantly due to a variety of factors. More information about these factors is contained in Bank of Hawaii Corporations' Annual Report on form 10-K for the year ended Dec. 31, 2007. Filed with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission. (BoH)

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Oil dips below \$40 on fears of weaker crude demand

SINGAPORE (AP)—Oil prices fell Tuesday in Asia, adding to a sharp drop overnight, as concern that energy demand is evaporating in the face of a severe global economic slowdown sent crude below \$40 a barrel. Light, sweet crude for February delivery fell 64 cents to \$39.27 a barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange by midday in Singapore. Prices have fallen 73 percent since July on investor fears that massive job layoffs and plummeting consumer spending in the U.S. are weakening global oil demand. The January contract fell to nearly a five-year low at \$33.87 a barrel before expiring on Friday. "Fears of demand are dragging the price lower," said Toby Hassall, an analyst at investment firm Commodity Warrants Australia in Sydney, adding that it was hard to bet against a worried market. "You don't want to get in the way of runaway train." Overnight, the February contract fell \$2.45 to settle at \$39.91 a barrel after Toyota Motor Corp. and drugstore operator Walgreen Co. reported dismal news.

Toyota projects first loss in 70 years

NAGOYA, Japan (AP)—Toyota has hit a speedbump. The Japanese auto giant forecast its first operating loss in 70 years on Monday, more fallout from the severe slump in vehicle sales that has nearly claimed two Detroit automakers and raised questions over when the U.S. market, Toyota's largest, will hit bottom. Despite the setback, the automaker is still poised to pull ahead of its main U.S. rival, General Motors Corp., to become the No. 1 world carmaker in 2008, industry watchers said. Toyota reported it sold 7.05 million cars worldwide during the first nine months of the year, compared with 6.66 million for GM for the same period. "They're going to grow and outstrip General Motors, there's no way around that," said George Magliano, analyst with IHS Global Insight. Toyota Motor Corp., which is committed to zero layoffs, will continue cutting production to weather the downturn. The automaker also lowered its global vehicle sales forecast for the second time this year and said it was putting ambitious expansion plans on hold, in large part because of a precipitous drop in demand in the U.S.

SHIPPING SCHEDULE



Outbound from Asia	Voyage No.	ETD Jakarta	ETD Bangkok	ETD P. Kelang	ETD Melbourne	ETD Singapore	ETD Hochiminh	ETD Busan	ETD Kobe	ETD Shanghai	ETD Auckland	ETD Manila	ETD Hongkong	ETD Kaoshiung	ETD Naha
MELL SINGAPORE	019E	12/13 Sat	12/11 Thu	12/11 Thu	12/9 Tue	12/6 Sat	12/19 Fri	12/15 Mon	12/14 Sun	12/7 Sun	12/7 Sun	12/15 Mon	12/19 Fri	12/21 Sun	12/23 Tue
STADT HAMBURG	027E	12/20 Sat	12/18 Thu	12/18 Thu	12/16 Tue	12/13 Sat	12/26 Fri	12/22 Mon	12/21 Sun	12/14 Sun	12/14 Sun	12/22 Mon	12/26 Fri	12/28 Sun	SKIP
MELL SENOKO	015E	12/27 Sat	12/25 Thu	12/25 Thu	12/23 Tue	12/20 Sat	1/2 Fri	12/29 Mon	12/28 Sun	12/21 Sun	12/21 Sun	12/29 Mon	1/2 Fri	1/4 Sun	1/6 Tue
MELL SENTOSA	014E	1/3 Sat	1/1 Thu	1/1 Thu	12/30 Tue	12/27 Sat	1/9 Fri	1/5 Mon	1/4 Sun	12/28 Sun	12/28 Sun	1/5 Mon	1/9 Fri	1/11 Sun	1/13 Tue
STADT HAMBURG	028E	1/10 Sat	1/8 Thu	1/8 Thu	1/6 Tue	1/3 Sat	1/16 Fri	1/12 Mon	1/11 Sun	1/4 Sun	1/4 Sun	1/12 Mon	1/16 Fri	1/18 Sun	1/20 Tue
MELL SENOKO	016E	1/17 Sat	1/15 Thu	1/15 Thu	1/13 Tue	1/10 Sat	1/23 Fri	1/19 Mon	1/18 Sun	1/11 Sun	1/11 Sun	1/19 Mon	1/23 Fri	1/25 Sun	1/27 Tue

Inbound from Asia	Voyage No.	ETA	ETD	ETA	ETA	ETA	ETA	ETA	ETA	ETA	ETA	ETA	ETA	ETA	ETA
		Guam		Saipan	Yap	Koror	GenSan	Davao	Cebu	Hongkong	Kaoshiung	Busan	Yokohama	Manila	Singapore
MELL SINGAPORE	019E	12/27 Sat	12/28 Sun	12/28 Sun	SKIP	1/1 Thu	1/3 Sat	1/4 Sun	1/5 Mon	1/9 Fri	1/8 Thu	1/15 Thu	2/3 Tue	2/1 Sun	1/14 Wed
STADT HAMBURG	027E	1/3 Sat	1/4 Sun	1/4 Sun	1/6 Tue	1/8 Thu	1/10 Sat	1/11 Sun	1/13 Tue	1/16 Fri	1/17 Sat	1/22 Thu	2/10 Tue	2/8 Sun	1/21 Wed
MELL SENOKO	015E	1/10 Sat	1/11 Sun	1/11 Sun	SKIP	1/15 Thu	1/17 Sat	1/18 Sun	1/20 Tue	1/23 Fri	1/24 Sat	1/29 Thu	2/17 Tue	2/15 Sun	1/28 Wed
MELL SENTOSA	014E	1/17 Sat	1/18 Sun	1/18 Sun	1/20 Tue	1/22 Thu	1/24 Sat	1/25 Sun	1/27 Tue	1/30 Fri	1/31 Sat	2/5 Thu	2/24 Tue	2/22 Sun	2/4 Wed
STADT HAMBURG	028E	1/24 Sat	1/25 Sun	1/25 Sun	SKIP	1/29 Thu	1/31 Sat	2/1 Sun	2/3 Tue	2/6 Fri	2/7 Sat	2/12 Thu	3/3 Tue	3/1 Sun	2/11 Wed
MELL SENOKO	016E	1/31 Sat	2/1 Sun	2/1 Sun	2/3 Tue	2/5 Thu	2/7 Sat	2/8 Sun	2/10 Tue	2/13 Fri	2/14 Sat	2/19 Thu	3/10 Tue	3/8 Sun	2/18 Wed

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Nation

5 men convicted of conspiracy to kill US soldiers

CAMDEN, N.J. (AP)—Five Muslim immigrants accused of scheming to massacre U.S. soldiers at Fort Dix were convicted of conspiracy Monday in a case that tested the FBI's post-Sept. 11 strategy of infiltrating and breaking up terrorist plots in their earliest stages. The men could get life in prison when they are sentenced in April.

The five, who lived in and around Philadelphia for years, were found guilty of conspiring to kill U.S. military personnel. But they were acquitted of attempted murder after prosecutors acknowledged the men were

probably months away from an attack and did not necessarily have a specific plan. Four defendants were also convicted of weapons charges.

The federal jury deliberated for 38 hours over six days.

The government said after the arrests in 2007 that case underscored the dangers of terrorist plots hatched on U.S. soil. Although investigators said the conspirators were inspired by Osama bin Laden, they were not accused of any ties to foreign terror groups.

Defense lawyers argued that the alleged plot was all talk—

that the men weren't seriously planning anything and that they were manipulated and goaded by two paid FBI informants.

Faten Shnewer, the mother of defendant Mohamad Shnewer, said the informants should be the ones in jail. "Not my son and his friends. It's not right, it's not justice," she said after the verdict. The government "sent somebody to push him to say something; that's it."

Convicted were: Shnewer, a Jordanian-born cab driver; Turkish-born convenience store clerk Serdar Tatar; and brothers Dritan, Elvir and

Shain Duka, ethnic Albanians from the former Yugoslavia, who had a roofing business. A sixth man arrested and charged only with gun offenses pleaded guilty earlier.

The government said the men were targeting New Jersey's Fort Dix for an attack but had also conducted surveillance at Fort Monmouth, Dover Air Force Base in Delaware and other military installations, and had talked about assaulting some of those spots. The jury did not have to find that the men had any specific target in mind to convict them.

Winter visits with record vengeance

The weather outside was frightful from Portland, Maine, to Portland, Ore., on Monday, with last-minute holiday shoppers shivering and stranded travelers hoping for the best as Christmas rapidly approached. The little town of Eustis, Maine, got nearly 3 1/2 feet of snow. In Marysville, Wash., north of Seattle, heavy snow collapsed part of the roof Monday at the Whitley Evergreen factory, which makes modular buildings. No one was injured, but inspectors were dispatched to make sure other buildings in the business park were safe.

"It is amazing," said Dave Thompson, spokesman for the Oregon Department of Transportation. "You say to yourself: 'That's Portland?' The roads are snowpacked, covered with ice and it's freezing rain."

Kim Osgood, who owns Paloma Clothing in the Hillsdale Shopping Center in southwest Portland, served hot cocoa on Sunday and gave away \$24 crampons—foot gear for ice and snow climbs—to anyone spending \$50 in her store.

"This is the worst Christmas I have ever seen in 33 years," Osgood said. "The good news here is for shoppers. If they can get out, they'll get amazing bargains." (AP)

Saipan Ice & Water Co., Inc. December 2008 Christmas Raffle draw WINNERS!

Name Address Ticket

Grand Price Winner of Hot & Cold Dispenser

1) Mel Ngirausui	7911 svrb	838266
2) Paul Puguon	PMB 459 Box 10003	745927

DVD Player Winners

1) Lorna Tanghal	723808
2) Kelly Miao	548985
3) Manny	838247
4) Jun Cruz	745488
5) Romila E. Sablan	475845
6) Lens 5	620158
7) Seoul One	746892
8) Kalayaan	723349
9) Lina	548708
10) D'Elegance	548232
11) A. Loste	723302
12) Mike Nate	723400

Consolation Prizes—Hand Soap / Glass Cleaner

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2) Carmelita Castillo	Dan Dan	477012
3) Elena Bichayda	517608	
4) Ronie Arconado	China Town	620186
5) Jesus Dela Cruz	Kagman	838277
6) Maria DL Guerrero	548614	
7) Angie Lee	839726	
8) Hida	473331	
9) Coby Rebauliman	476633	
10) Nelson Lapuz	839644	
11) Frances Anchiang	469085	
12) Faustina	San Vicente	475978
13) Fei Zhang	526545	
14) S.H.	839193	
15) Carmen	San Vicente	745636
16) Gloria R.	527325	
17) Elvie	746980	
18) Ruzel Collada	549309	
19) Lotty Manglona	478077	
20) Mandy RNV Const.	759250	
21) Ikey Teregyo	477556	
22) Chong Wan Won	516599	
23) Edwin Mactal	759544	
24) Jesse Chong	San Antonio	465720
25) Joseph Achas	517549	
26) Angel Salas	549539	
27) Vicente Lizama	457876	
28) Evelyn Reyes	Dan Dan	527592
29) Denny Jepen	Kagman	526873
30) Kang Kee Hyung	San Vicente	852469
31) Tom Agnon	473896	
32) Anna Rumoon	Kobler	457737
33) Tess	San Vicente	469948
34) Ivan Mereb	Fina Terrace Rm. 101	477041
35) Lily Caroman	466025	
36) Julia	San Vicente	478689
37) Manny	Finasissu	620977
38) Luz Alcausin	Dan Dan	621588
39) Nenet Gatluda	China Town	466577
40) Thelma B Taroy	723098	
41) Zaldy C/O Len	724988	
42) Mike Babauta	Suspe	746070
43) Leoniza Pamintuan	Garapan	458121
44) Joseph Liamzon	Aquarius Hotel	465420
45) Vivian Angui	621402	
46) Michael John Banal	Koblerville	470988
47) Cockpit Cafe	Airport	839093
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50) Helen Hocog	526476	
51) Wang Ten Lan	621649	
52) Amy Sarise	549858	
53) Triple J	Lower Base	621018
54) Norma	469902	
55) Sushi Land	478570	
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57) Juan Gusler	478858	
58) Kios Rudolph	P.O. Box 506124	457448
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62) Justin Anderson	724765	
63) Lauri Oguoro	P.O. Box 5524 CHRB	549109
64) Germinalio A. Real Jr.	Travellers Lodge	724967

65) Albert Osorio	P.A.S	517481
66) Mary S. Villa	P.O. Box 504179	478297
67) Gilbert C/O Len		724997
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69) WindleCiano	Finasissu Terrace	839558
70) Ben Olaitiman	P.O. Box 500895	526421
71) Ray Cabrena		838891
72) Eloy Cabrera		851122
73) J. Villa Gomez	P.O. Box 5683 CHRB	838892
74) Triple J	Lower Base	621004
75) Woo Sule Chang	P.O. Box	470028
76) Carmen Buenavaje	Dan Dan	457127
77) Peter Towai	P.O. Box 502858	838318
78) Minda 4A's		759993
79) Analy Manansala	Garapan	838135
80) Thomas Angui		457463
81) Ben Laborce	Dan Dan	458442
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83) Quinna Carreon	Kannat Tabla	745576
84) Roseminda Agpoon		458987
85) Floro Reyes		478444
86) MN Marron		476210
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88) Noreta Sta Ana	Garapan	516916
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90) Eric Caisip	Garapan	724954
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128) Sonny		548947
129) WTC	PMB 50864 CK	548535
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131) Japing Li		621619
132) Mike Babauta	Susupe	746072
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134) Tom Agnon		473903
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137) Thelma Taroy	P.O. Box 503926	723096
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139) Jay Francis Pineda	PMB 702 Box 10003	458246
140) Leonardo Beneto		746500
141) Jenne Angui		549808
142) Lourdes T. Deus	P.O. Box 7921 SVRB	474366
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144) Abdul Khalak	Garapan	

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\$1.19

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12 oz. LIMIT 12
\$1.89

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Mackarel 15 oz.
\$1.59

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3.75 oz.
.79¢

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Creamer 50 oz.
\$6.99

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Roast 39 oz.
\$7.99

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Imitation 1 lb.
\$2.49

Ox & Palm Corned
Beef 11.5 oz.
LIMIT 6
\$2.29

Golden State Vinegar
1 Gal.
\$2.79

Campbells Chicken
Noodle Soup 10.7 oz.
.89¢

Carnation Evaporated
Milk 12 oz.
.99¢

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5 LBS.
\$9.99
10 LBS.
\$16.95

Pike Mackarel
Family Bag
\$5.95

Mackarel
Family Bag
\$5.95

Cream of Mushroom
10 3/4 oz.
.99¢

DM Beef Stew
15 oz.
**2FOR
\$3.00**

One Whole Chicken
50 oz.
\$4.99

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LIMIT 12 Cans
\$10.9

Gusto Ham
10 lbs.
\$16.99

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5 lbs.
\$14.95

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1 lb.
\$3.99

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12 oz.
\$1.39

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Sausage 5 oz.
.59¢

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No Beans 15 oz.
**2FOR
\$3.00**

Mary Kitchen Corned
Beef Hash 15 oz.
\$1.79

Bar-S Bacon
1 lb.
\$2.49

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1 lb.
\$1.05

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10 lbs.
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1 Litre
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(Reg. & Low Fat)
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\$5.99

Marca El Rey Chorizos
4 lb./64 oz.
\$21.99

Peeled Shrimp
SC Brand 1 lb.
\$2.99

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Feng Brand 1 lb.
\$2.59

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Per Box
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1.6 L.
\$3.79

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5.29 oz.
\$4.99

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5 Gal. LIMIT 1
\$29.99

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3 lbs.
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1 lb.
\$5.99

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2 lbs.
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2 kg.
\$1.49

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\$8.99

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Dozen
\$2.29

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8 oz.
\$1.99
16 oz.
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\$3.00**

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\$5.99

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25.7
\$26.99

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Name 100 cnts.
.99¢

Shasta Drinks 11oz
All Flavor
(warm only)
\$12.99

Garlic
\$7.99
4 pc./
Bundle

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128 fl.oz. (1Gal)
\$8.99

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Oil 1 Gal.
\$9.99

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\$5.99

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Budweiser / Budlight
24/Case Warm Only
\$24.99

Chamorro Punch
1 Gal.
\$8.99

Asia

India FM: We will act on Mumbai if Pakistan won't

NEW DELHI (AP)—Pakistan is shifting blame and responsibility for last month's deadly attacks in Mumbai, India's foreign minister charged Monday, adding that Delhi would take action against the perpetrators if Islamabad failed to.

India also gave Pakistan a letter written by Mohammed Ajmal Kasab, the only gunman captured after the rampage. Kasab wrote that he and the nine other gunmen involved in the Nov. 26 attack all came from Pakistan, India's Foreign Ministry said. He also requested a meeting with Pakistani envoys, the ministry said.

Islamabad has not acknowledged that Kasab is Pakistani and has said it is waiting for proof of his citizenship before it will take further action.

India's Foreign Minister Pranab Mukherjee said that if Pakistan doesn't deal with those responsible, India was prepared to "take all measures necessary as we deem fit to deal with the situation." He did not elaborate about the measures.

"Unfortunately, Pakistan's response so far has demonstrated their earlier tendency to resort to a policy of denial and to seek to deflect and shift the blame and responsibility," he told a meet-



Indian Foreign Minister Pranab Mukherjee, left, talks with Foreign Secretary Shiv Shankar Menon at a meeting in New Delhi, India, Monday, Dec. 22, 2008.

ing of Indian envoys in Delhi.

The investigation into the attacks that killed 164 people has heightened tensions between India and Pakistan, longtime rivals that have fought three wars since gaining independence

from Britain in 1947.

On Monday, fighter jets flew low near several of Pakistan's major cities in exercises that briefly delayed two Pakistan International Airlines flights, airline officials said.

China earthquake parents sue over school collapse

BEIJING (AP)—A court in China has rejected a lawsuit filed by a group of parents seeking compensation for the deaths of their children when their classrooms crumbled during earthquake in May, one of the parents said Tuesday.

The court's move is a sign of the authorities' extreme sensitivity to any protests by parents demanding investigations into alleged corruption and shoddy construction, a flash point for government critics after the 7.9-magnitude quake killed nearly 70,000 people in Sichuan province, including many students.

Afghan leader presses US military on strategy

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—

President Hamid Karzai pressed America's top military leader Monday on the U.S. strategy in Afghanistan and preparations to pour up to 30,000 more forces into the country, reflecting Karzai's concerns over civilian casualties and operations in villages. Karzai asked Adm. Mike Mullen, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, what kinds of operations the newly deployed troops would carry out and told him that the Afghan government should be consulted

classrooms were destroyed. Their deaths have become a sensitive political issue, with parents—many of whom lost their only child—staging protests demanding investigations.

Many of the parents say they have also been subjected to intimidation and financial inducements to silence them.

Sang, one of the parents' representatives, said a judge from the court last week informed the plaintiffs verbally that it would not accept their case and that the central government had issued an internal memo to the courts to say that such cases were not to be heard.

The parents want an official apology and compensation for the deaths of their children after Fuxin No. 2 Primary School in Mianzhu city collapsed during the May 12 quake.

The government still has not given a separate toll for children who were crushed when their shoddily built schools collapsed, but has said that about 7,000

Karzai wants more forces deployed along the Afghan border to combat insurgents infiltrating from Pakistan, where suspected U.S. missile strikes Monday killed eight people in a region where al-Qaida and Taliban leaders are believed hiding.

World

US warns Russia versus selling missiles to Iran

WASHINGTON (AP)—U.S.

officials said Monday that they want answers from Russia on whether it is selling advanced surface-to-air missiles to Iran, a move the U.S. insists could threaten American troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. A senior military intelligence official said that while Moscow has sent out conflicting responses to reports on the sale of long-range S-300 missiles, the U.S. believes it is taking place. However, it appears that no equipment has yet been delivered to Iran, said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the matter.

Russia's state arms export agency said Monday it is supplying Iran with defensive weapons, including surface-to-air missiles, but did not say whether they include sophisticated long-range

S-300 missiles.

State Department spokesman Robert Wood said the U.S. is seeking clarification from Russia.

"We have repeatedly made clear at senior levels of the Russian government that we would strongly oppose the sale of the S-300," Wood said. "As the U.S. government has said before, this is not the time for business as usual with the Iranian government."

Iran currently has an antiquated missile defense system, dating back to the 1960s and 1970s, so the Russian sale would provide Tehran a much longer range, more mobile and lethal capability. With a range of roughly 75 miles, the Russian system would allow Iran to reach coalition forces operating in Iraq and Afghanistan, if the missiles were moved near

the borders.

Both the U.S. and Israel have strongly opposed the sale, saying that supplying such an advanced anti-aircraft system to Iran would shift the military balance of power in the Middle East. It also would make any strike at Iran's first nuclear power plant—which Russia is helping to build—more difficult.

There have been indications that Russia intends to supply only defensive weapons to Iran, thus keeping in line with U.N. Security Council resolutions that impose sanctions on Iran for refusing to halt its uranium enrichment and prohibit supplying Iran with materials that could contribute to its nuclear program.

Officials acknowledge that the sale of the S-300 system is not prohibited by the resolution.

Iraqi PM: Shoe-thrower blames throat-slitter

BAGHDAD (AP)—Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki moved

Monday to undermine the popularity of the Iraqi who threw his shoes at President George W. Bush, saying the journalist confessed that the mastermind of the attack was a militant known for slitting his victims' throats.

Tensions over the case also spilled into parliament, as a move to oust the abrasive Sunni speaker delayed a key decision on whether non-U.S. foreign troops will be allowed to stay in Iraq beyond New Year's Eve.

Al-Maliki said that in a letter of apology to him, Muntadhar al-Zeidi wrote that a known militant had induced him to throw the shoes.

"He revealed ... that a person provoked him to commit this act, and that person

is known to us for slitting throats," al-Maliki said, according to the prime minister's Web site. The alleged instigator was not named and neither al-Maliki nor any of his officials would elaborate.

The journalist's family denied the claim and alleged that al-Zeidi was coerced into writing the letter, in which he was said to have requested a pardon for "the big and ugly act that I perpetrated."

Al-Zeidi's brother Dhargham said that it was "unfair" of al-Maliki to make the allegation about the throat-slitter and described the prime minister as "a sectarian man who is destroying the Iraqi people."

Earlier, another brother said he met the journalist in prison and that he had expressed no

ACROSS THE NATION

Guinea's dictator, Lansana Conte, dead

CONAKRY, Guinea (AP)—Guinea President Lansana Conte, who has ruled the African nation with an iron hand since seizing power in a coup nearly a quarter century ago, has died following a lengthy illness, the National Assembly president said Tuesday. Aboubacar Sompore, flanked by the country's prime minister and the head of the army, said on state-run television 2 a.m. that Conte died Monday evening. He was believed to be in his 70s but the government has never disclosed his birth date. "I have the heavy duty of informing the people of Guinea of the death of Gen.

Lansana Conte following a long illness," said Sompore. He did not provide a specific cause of death or elaborate on the type of illness. Sompore said that for many years Conte "hid his physical suffering in order to give happiness to Guinea."

UN extends protection for Iraqi assets

UNITED NATIONS (AP)—In a move sought by Iraq at a critical transition, the Security Council voted unanimously Monday to maintain U.N. protection for billions of dollars of Iraqi assets against seizure by governments, companies or individuals until the end of 2009. Iraq's financial

assets, oil shipments and property are currently shielded by a U.N. resolution authorizing the U.S.-led multinational force in Iraq. The U.N. mandate expires on Dec. 31 and is being replaced by a new U.S.-Iraq security pact, but the Iraqi government wanted the U.N. protection of its assets to continue so it sought a new resolution. Iraq's Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki wrote to council members that the government inherited debts and claims from Saddam Hussein's 23-year rule and has made "great progress" in settling them. But he said "much remains to be done" and that the government needs its oil money and other assets.

Campus Life

Encourage your child to read this Christmas break

By SUDI Q. NAPALAN
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

This Christmas, why not bond with your children by reading?

Family members who read to and with their children promote literacy by growing their understanding of stories, enhancing oral language, and building vocabulary.

Here are some ideas that may help.

Create a special reading place and time at home.

Provide a space in your home for comfortable, quiet spot with good lighting for reading. Set aside a quite reading time everyday and be consistent in reading 10-15 minutes daily.



Discuss books with your child and set a good example by reading on your own.

Parents can start the conversation by talking about what they also read and ask their children to talk about books and other print materials that they are reading. Ask follow-up questions about their readings.

Get a library card for your child.

Visit the library every week and borrow several books reading materials for your child. Become familiar with popular books and magazines that your child may be interested in. Most public

libraries offer activities, services and programs that are free of charge and find ways to involve your child in them.

Collect reading materials at home.

Gather books, newspapers and magazines and have them available for your children. Be aware of your child's interest and find books that are related to his interest. Look out for garage sales and book fairs for cheap books or local bookstores discounted sales.

Read books that last for days.

Children enjoy continuous stories and are eager for the next installment. Read chapter books to your children.

Family members who read to and with their children promote literacy by growing their understanding of stories, enhancing oral language, and building vocabulary.

SUDI NAPALAN

For older children, try to find a series that he really likes. The library can provide list of books with series for different genres.

Reread favorite books.

Expect children to have favorite books and they may ask you to reread them. It is important for children to hear books

with rhyme, rhythm, and repetition.

Remember: Don't force or nag your children to read. Encourage them by reading aloud, reading alternate pages of the book or reading silently side by side.

Sudi Q. Napalan is the librarian at the Saipan Southern High School Library.



A Northern Mariana Islands Social Service

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR FINANCIAL AUDIT

This is to request for proposal (RFP) to perform a financial and compliance audit on KARIDAT for fiscal years ending September 30, 2008, 2009 and 2010. The audit will be performed in compliance with the generally accepted auditing standards. The proposals must be submitted to Karidat's Office in Chalan Kanoa or mailed to Karidat Social Service, P.O. Box 500745, Saipan, MP 96950 by January 05, 2009.

- I. **Contents of Proposal:** The following information must be included in the audit proposal.
 - A. Title Page Containing:
 1. RFP Subject
 3. Local Address
 5. Name of contact person
 2. Name of your firm
 4. Telephone number
 6. Submission Date
- II. **Transmittal Letter:**
 - A. A brief statement of your understanding of the work to be performed and an affirmative statement to perform work within the time period stipulated.
 - B. State all-inclusive fee for which the audit will be performed.
- III. **Firm Profile:** Provide a brief description of your firm's personnel education background and experience, number of staff, staff level (partner, Manager, supervisor, etc.) and client listings. The firm must make an affirmative statement that at least the partners are Certified Public Accountants (CPAs)
- IV. **Proposal Evaluation Criteria:** The proposals will be evaluated on the basis of the following criteria.
 - A. Responsiveness of the proposal in clearly stating understanding of the work to be performed:
 1. Audit coverage
 2. Overall estimates as well as the time estimates for each major section of the work to be performed.
 - B. Qualifications and experience of firm:
 1. Size and structure of the firm
 2. Ability to maintain continuity of project
 3. Experience of the firm in auditing Federal Financial Assistance programs and Non-Profit Organization.
 - C. Qualifications and experience of staff to be assigned, Education, position in the firm, and years and type of experience will be considered.
 1. Qualifications of audit team
 2. Supervision to be exercised over the audit team firms
 - D. Audit Fee
- V. **Audit Administration Matters:**
 - A. KARIDAT staff will prepare schedules as required by the Auditors.
 - B. Audit Planning Meetings, Interim conferences and Exit Conference may be attended by following officials:
 1. Executive Director and Board Members of Karidat
 - C. Date of contract award will be January 12, 2009 and the audit field work must be completed by February 13, 2009.
 - D. The draft audit report must be completed no later than April 30, 2009.
 - E. All inquiries must be in writing and submitted prior to the proposal deadline of January 5, 2009.
- VI. **Confidentiality of Audit Proposals:** All audit proposals will be reviewed in a confidential manner. Proposal must be labeled "Confidential" and transmitted to the Executive Director, **KARIDAT P.O. BOX 500745, SAIPAN, MP 96950**. It may also be hand-delivered to the Executive Director at the KARIDAT Social Services Office in Chalan Kanoa.

Sincerely,

Angie Guerrero
Executive Director



**Commonwealth Of the Northern Mariana Islands
Office of the Secretary of Public Works**

2nd Floor Joeten Commercial Building, Gualo Rai
Saipan, MP 96950



INVITATION FOR BIDS

DPW09-IFB-002

CONSTRUCTION OF SABANA ROAD AND DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS, ROUTE II ROTA

Governor Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Governor Timothy P. Villagomez, through the Department of Public Works (DPW) are soliciting sealed bids for the Construction of Sabana Road and Drainage Improvements Route 11, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (ROTA).

The project package will be available on or after December 10, 2008 at Pacific Quick Print & Post, Chalan Pale Arnold, Saipan. A non-refundable payment to Pacific Quick Print & Post, amount to be determined, is required for each set. All interested bidders are also required to include Insurer Clearance Certification (ICC) in their bid packages in order to bid on this project. The ICC can be obtained at the Department of Commerce/Office of the Insurance Commissioner (Ole) on Capitol Hill.

Bidding procedures shall be in full compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations, dated May 24, 2001, however, Article 7, "Local Business Preference", as amended by Public Law 15-95 and as further amended by Public Law 15-118, is not available to local bidders in this procurement because its use is prohibited by the Federal law granting the funding for this project. All wages rates for employees performing the work, labor and services on this project shall be paid the current minimum wages as required by the CNMI law & Federal Law.

There will be a Pre-bid Conference for this project on December 30, 2008, 9:00 a.m. local time at the Department of Public Works Conference Room, Gualo Rai Office. The Prospective bidders are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the site. All questions regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than 4:30 p.m. local time on January 20, 2009 to Mr. Joseph M. Inos, Jr., Director of Technical Services Division, DPW 2nd Floor Joeten Commercial Building, Oleai Center, Saipan or fax to (670) 234-3547.

Sealed bids must be marked "DPW09-IFB-002". For bidders within the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be submitted to the Director of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, no later than 10:00 a.m. local time January 23, 2009. Bidders located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional Seven (7) working days for receipt of their bids by submitting a Notice of Intent to bid. Notices of Intent to bid must be received by the Director of Procurement and Supply no later than 10:00 a.m. local time January 23, 2009, and must be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515, or via e-mail to procurement@pticom.com. For bidders located outside the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than January 23, 2009, and must be received no later than February 3, 2009. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a bid.

Bids will be publicly opened and read at the Division of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, at 10:00 a.m. local time, February 5, 2009. However, if no notices of intent to bid were received from bidders outside the CNMI, bids will be opened at 10:00 a.m. local time, on January 27, 2009.

For bids greater than Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000.00) a bid security of fifteen (15%) of the bid amount must accompany the bid. This security may be Certified Check, Cashier's Check or Bid Bond. Checks must be made payable to the CNMI Treasurer, with the name of the bidder and a notation on the face of the check: "Credit Account No. 44660".

The bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be subject to a responsibility determination in conformance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations Section 3-301. The responsible bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be awarded a contract with the CNMI Government and will be required to deliver Performance and Payment bonds, each equal to 100% of the contract price for contracts greater than \$25,000.00. The surety company providing the Performance and payment bonds must be authorized to conduct business in CNMI and possess unencumbered assets equal to the penal amount of each bond.

Performance time for completion of this project is Two hundred Forty (240) working days upon issuance of Notice to Proceed. Liquidated damages for delays beyond the established completion date will be assessed according to Table 108-1 of the Standard Specification for Construction and Bridges on Federal Projects FP-96.

This project is funded in part by a grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Contract award is contingent upon funding approval by the FHWA.

All bid documents received shall become the sole property of the CNMI Government. The Government reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to waive any imperfection in a bid proposal that does not effect the elements of price, quantity, and delivery of the bid, in the best interest of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

/s/ DIEGO B. SONGSON
Secretary of Public Works

/s/ HERMAN S. SABLON
Director, Procurement & Supply

Life & Style



SHOW OF APPRECIATION

PDM Promoters Inc., headed by CEO and director Misako Kamata, and her volunteers treated the *man'amko* and the staff at the Office on Aging to a Japanese style lunch buffet as a show of appreciation for the *man'amko's* special participation during PDM's Christmas tree Decoration Contest 2008 at the Paseo de Marianas.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



RIBBON-CUTTING RITES

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, third from left, and Kumho Resort president Bong Ko Kim, fourth from left, led the ribbon cutting ceremony of the new clubhouse of the Laolao Bay Golf Resort last Friday in Kagman.

MARK RABAGO



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

PDM Promoters Inc. volunteers pose with the *man'amko* and the staff at the Office on Aging after the appreciation luncheon.



JOETEN DONATIONS

Joeten Motors' general manager Matt Deets turns over a check to Margaret Dela Cruz of Mt. Carmel School as the company's educational tax credit donation.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The *man'amko* and staff of Office on Aging enjoy the lunch provided by PDM Promoters Inc.



Joeten Motors' general manager Matt Deets turns over a check to Marianas Baptist Academy pastor/principal Ramiro Trinidad as the company's educational tax credit donation.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



PDM Promoters Inc. CEO and director Misako Kamata and a PDM volunteer flank one of the *man'amko* during the appreciation luncheon.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Speaker Arnold Palacios congratulates Kumho Resort for the opening of the new Laolao Bay Golf Resort clubhouse.

MARK RABAGO



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Fr. Manny Corcuera, himself an avid golfer, makes a short speech before blessing the Laolao Bay Golf Resort clubhouse as Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, Senate President Pete Reyes, House Speaker Arnold Palacios, and Kumho Asiana officials, led by Kumho Resort president Bong Ko Kim, look on.



MARK RABAGO

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, Senate President Pete Reyes, House Speaker Arnold Palacios, and Kumho Asiana officials, led by Kumho Resort president Bong Ko Kim, bow as Fr. Manny Corcuera prays, blessing the newly opened Laolao Bay Golf Resort clubhouse.



Kids write, Santa responds and hopes for the best

By ASHLEY POWERS
(C) 2008, LOS ANGELES TIMES

PAHRUMP, Nev.—The Santa Claus of this bleak desert outpost wears a polo shirt with a pack of Camel Lights in the pocket and a pair of suspenders stretched tight over his stomach. Larry Bai is 60, balding and Jewish. He shuffles through the post office doors this blustery morning, gripping a cane topped with a lion's head. He opens Santa's post office box, number 133. There are eight more letters. Bai will respond to each writer who includes a return address, and, for the Pahrump Valley Lion's Club, buy hundreds of presents, wrap them in snowman-patterned paper and deliver them across the town. Here in Nye County, whose 10.5 percent unemployment rate is the state's second highest, those might be the only presents some children get.

His annual effort is harder this year: The club has raised \$2,000—half of last year's total. The group reluctantly cut about one-fifth of the eligible kids by dropping the maximum age from 14 to 10. Bai's wife, Sue, who's in charge of shopping, is spending \$10 on each child instead of \$12 to \$15. Larry has resolved to dip into his own pocket if need be.

Charities big and small are experiencing the same disjunction this Christmas: What do you do when folks give less but need more? Across Nevada's vast rural stretches, jobs are scarce. Construction work in particular has vanished. There are few social service groups and most are starved for funds.

The holidays look so grim that this Santa gets letters from cash-strapped parents.

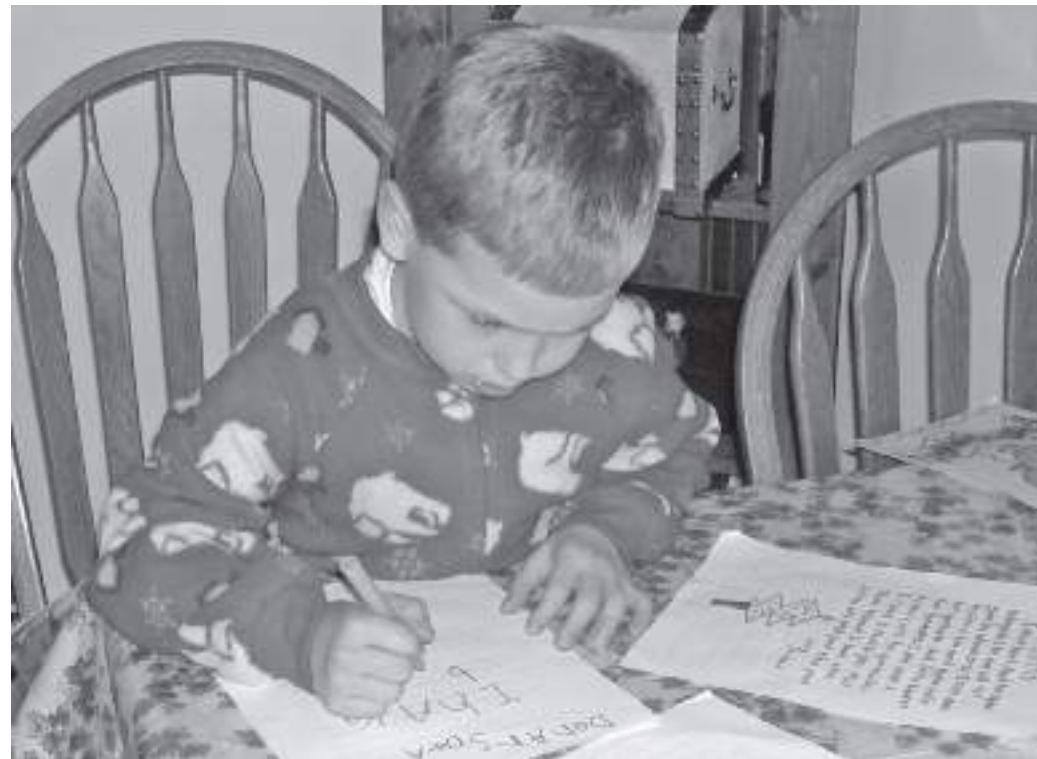
"Dear Santa,

I am writing you on behalf of my 2-year-old son. Things have been kind of tuff this year with my husband out of work. My son ... likes anything that's cars, tractors, trucks and construction equipment (toys) ... Thank you so much."

On a recent afternoon, Larry drives his yellow Saturn Vue to a Wal-Mart Supercenter. Salvation Army bells clang. Shopping cart wheels screech. Parents add a chorus of "put that back!"

Sue, a 57-year-old bank manager, and her friend Debbie Martinez roam the aisles with two shopping carts and spreadsheets listing about 100 letter-writers and their requests. Sue sticks closely to the kids' wishes, although girls hoping for baby sisters get baby dolls instead. The boy who asked for "15 screws and one hammer" will unwrap a football, his other request. More than ever she considers her budget; it settles so many decisions.

Sue studies a wall of biking knee pads. A teenager had asked Santa for a pair. He's too old for the Lions Club program, but his younger siblings are getting gifts.



A child writes a letter to Santa. If there's anything hopeful this year, it's that some kids are learning there are things more important than what they want for Christmas.

She turns to Larry. "We've got these families with kids under 10 and kids over 10," she says, her palms upturned. Some of the children have written to Santa for years. "You can't leave them out," he says. The women agree. Debbie, a 50-year-old homemaker wearing a Miami Dolphins sweat shirt, spots a pair of Mongoose black gel pads. They're \$9.96.

Sue scans the list to see whether other kids might be too old for a gift. "You want to take care of every child that asks for something," she sighs, "but you just can't." The women pass on a Cooking Essentials 20-piece baking set (\$19.74); a Super Grover Building Set (\$15.97) and most cupcake-makers—all too expensive. Debbie offers to tackle the remainder of the list at KB Toys, which recently filed for Chapter

11 bankruptcy protection.

"They said on TV they're hoping to get rid of all the toys before Christmas," she says.

"We can help them with that," Sue replies.

In the checkout line, the women pay \$274.67 for 41 things. Talk turns to their after-lunch destination: the clothing aisles.

"There's a woman with five or six kids and her husband's out of work," Debbie says. Her voice catches. "She's got 14-month-old twins."

Larry heads home while the women stay and shop. Nevada 160, Pahrump's main drag, which is lined with small casinos, chain retailers, a strip club with castlelike turrets and rock lots with "For Sale" signs.

He and Sue moved from Victorville, Calif., to Pahrump, an unincorporated town of 40,000,

in the late 1990s when Sue got a job at Community Bank of Nevada. Their married daughter and two grandchildren live in Las Vegas.

The Bais live in a single-story, salmon-colored home with rock landscaping, palm trees and a red-tile roof. The Letters to Santa program has commandeered their living room, which holds rolls of Christmas paper, wrapped boxes and an un-

wrapped stuffed pig that snores.

Larry brought the idea with him from his Lions Club in Apple Valley, near Victorville, and launched it in 2002. The first year, 35 kids wrote letters. Last year, there were 700. Larry has responded to about 2,000. (He draws the line at wearing a Santa costume. Someone else appears at school events and the town's holiday festival, Pahrump-apum-pum.)

The 2008 letters cover Larry's kitchen table. Some arrived in July. One girl wrote on Cheetah Girls stationery. Another mailed a flier for Littlest Pet Shop toys, circling her favorites. A boy offered a numbered list of 40 options. One child asked for a polar bear.

The Lions Club sometimes singles out a kid whose plight is particularly severe.

This year, it's hard to choose one letter. A girl wrote asking for a wheelchair ramp. A grandmother begged for size-small underwear for her grandson and size 6 or 7 socks for her teenage daughter.

Some writers confided in Santa the way they might in a priest.

"Dear Santa,

My Mom got into a really bad car accident a few months ago ... She was hospitalized and was in critical condition. She had to pay many hospital bills and was fired from her old job for disability and was unemployed for about five months. Since we couldn't

afford much ... I am asking for your help on this one thing.

A mother of three wrote from across the country. Larry's not sure how she found him and plans to notify a Lions club in New York.

To whom it may concern, I am in a state of dire need. I am not working right now and do not have money to buy toys for my kids. We live humbly in the Bronx, N.Y. I beg of you from the heart if you are able to help me give my kids a merry Christmas with some toys for them to play with."

Larry finds himself staring at the letters and framing Santa's answers for days. When he finally writes back, he doesn't save a copy—the response stays between Santa and the kids.

For weeks, he has been typing in his cluttered office and watching CNBC. One colors the other. Bailout money, campaign contributions, CEO salaries ... even a fraction of that money could make such a difference in so many kids' Christmases. If there's anything hopeful this year, he says, it's that some kids are learning there are things more important than what they want for Christmas.

"Hi, Santa:

How are you? ... If you can bring me these toys it's okay but if you can't I understand because there is a lot of kids without toys. How are your reindeer too?"

In Loving Memory of

Gaudencia I. Sablan

(Gauden/Dinga)

May 30, 1956 — December 19, 2008

was called to her eternal rest at the age of 52.

Gauden will be greeted at the gates of heaven by her:

Parents: †Simon E. Ilal and †Rita F. Ilal
Brother & Sisters: †Cornelia Fitial, †Clara F. Ilal and †Henry F. Ilal
Parents In-Law: †David S. Sablan and †Engracia O. Sablan

She will always be remembered in the hearts of:

Husband: Benigno O. Sablan
Children & Spouse: Rita I. Tarope
 Melycher I. Sablan (Benicia Mariden Lowailei I. Sablan)
 Benigno I. Sablan Jr. (Cora K. Norita)
 Marvin M. Ngeskebei
 Auden M. Ngeskebei
 Manuel Fitial/†Elisa N. Fitial and children
 Bernadita F. Ilal and children
 Mariana F. Ilal (Simon Ilal)
 Laurencia F. Ilal/†Joaquin Igisomar
Brother/Sister In-Laws/Spouse: Henry O. Sablan/Regina M. Sablan and children
 Angie S. Iba/†Jose S. Iba and children
 Thomas O. Sablan/Sue L. Sablan and children
 David O. Sablan/Bernadita M. Sablan and children
 †Nancy S. Iginoef/Ismael W. Iginoef and children
 Rosita S. Waldron/Brad Waldron (David S. Waldron)

She is also survived by numerous aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, nephews, godchildren and friends.

Daily rosary are being offered at the family's residence in Chalan Laulau at 7:30 p.m. On Saturday, December 27, 2008 the remains of the late will leave CHC at 7:00 a.m. and will be escorted to the family's residence in Chalan Laulau for viewing and responso. At 2:30 p.m. the body will be escorted to Mt. Carmel Cathedral for the Christian Mass at 3:00 p.m. and interment will follow at the Chalan Kanoa Cemetery.

Your thoughts and prayers are kindly appreciated.

Thank you, Ghilisow and Si Yuus Ma'ase.

From the husband, children and family

'Titanic' duo DiCaprio and Winslet sail again

LOS ANGELES (AP)—That pesky iceberg kept Leonardo DiCaprio and Kate Winslet from growing into an old married couple in "Titanic."

They finally get to test-drive a long-term relationship in "Revolutionary Road," and the two close friends really nail the whole love-and-marriage thing.

Lies. Distrust. Infidelity. Titanic shouting matches to rival George and Martha's in "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?"

After playing new lovers in a doomed romance aboard "Titanic," DiCaprio and Winslet had a great time tearing into each other as spouses in a sinking relationship in "Revolutionary Road."

"We very much took advantage of our friendship and our relationship for this film," DiCaprio said in an interview alongside Winslet. "When I

read the script, I thought, look at these scenes, and I'm imagining Kate doing it with me and being able to push each other as much as we possibly could.

"That gave me immediately a desire to say, 'OK, I can't wait for these sequences to start. I'm really going to give it to her, she's really going to give it to me.' And I know the fact that she's such a good friend of mine, we know each other so well, we know that we could push those boundaries, because we intrinsically know we have the best intentions for each other. So there's no weird, hidden ego. There's no hidden anything. It's two people just trying to do their best and just pushing each other."

"Revolutionary Road" casts DiCaprio, 34, and Winslet, 33, as Frank and April Wheeler, a couple suffocating amid the bland-

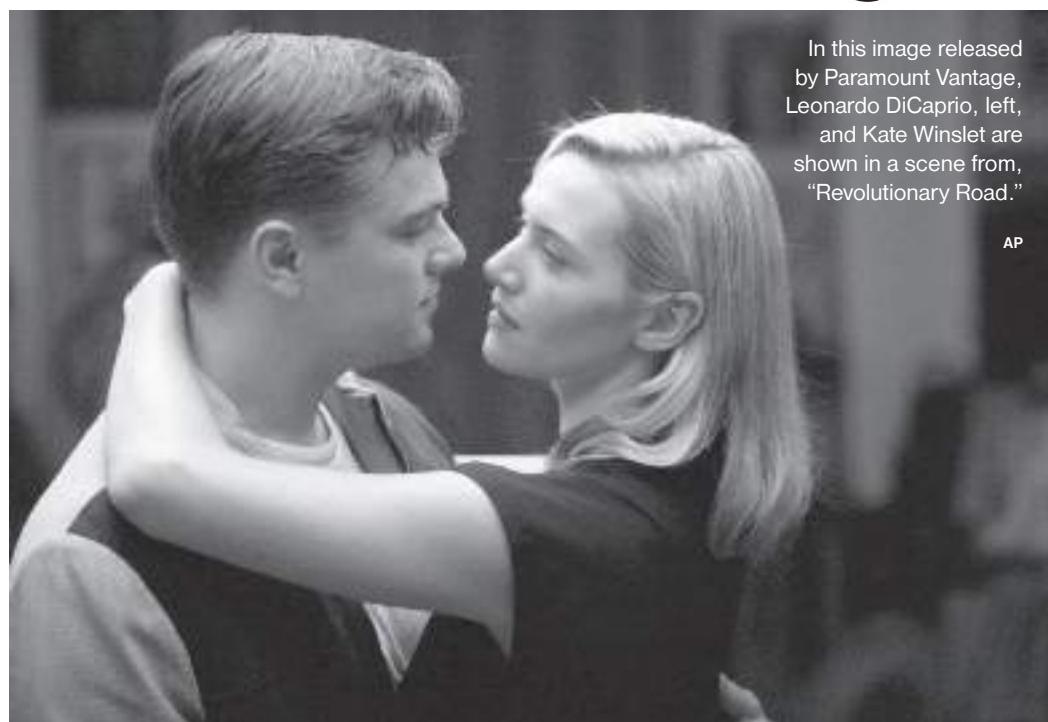
ness of 1950s American suburbia who hope to resurrect their crumbling marriage by moving to Paris with their children.

Directed by Winslet's husband, Sam Mendes, "Revolutionary Road" calls on the actors to quarrel savagely right from the film's opening moments.

It was an interesting challenge for Winslet and DiCaprio, who became close chums on the arduous "Titanic" shoot and cannot recall ever raising their voices to each other.

"People would say, 'Oh my gosh, you guys are such good friends. Did you ever, like, fight?' And we really would have to stop and think about it and realize that we hadn't," Winslet said.

After 1997's "Titanic," the biggest modern blockbuster with \$1.8 billion at the box office worldwide, Winslet and Di-



In this image released by Paramount Vantage, Leonardo DiCaprio, left, and Kate Winslet are shown in a scene from, "Revolutionary Road."

AP

Caprio knew they had to choose carefully if they were going to pair off again on-screen.

"We couldn't not realize that the elephant in the room was that we had done this film 'Titanic,' which happened to be the most successful movie of all time," DiCaprio said.

"To try to recreate anything close to that would be a mistake. It's important for me and for both of us to not make it look like we want to become sort of a couple that revisits things."

In a haughty British accent, he jokingly added: "Well, they enjoyed that first performance, let's give it to them one more time, darling. Just like the old days."

Although both felt it was just a matter of time before they teamed up again, it took 11 years before they were back on-set together.

"As the years were going by, the idea of working together again, I was craving it more and more," Winslet said. "Very selfishly, I felt it has to be the right thing, because I want to be on the set with him every day. I want to spend as much time with him as possible. It wasn't about equal roles, even. It was,

I want to bleed that experience dry. I really do, because I know what's there to be had, and anything less than that wouldn't have seemed as special."

For all the rewards "Titanic" brought, Winslet got an Oscar nomination, DiCaprio didn't. They hope "Revolutionary Road" might change that.

DiCaprio said he liked the idea of both scoring Oscar nominations this time because "I'd just like to hang out with her."

"I feel the same way," Winslet said. "I feel I couldn't have played April without Leo. I absolutely couldn't have done it. So it would feel extremely strange if I was there without him. It just wouldn't make sense somehow."

Winslet has five past Oscar nominations; DiCaprio has been nominated three times.

With an acclaimed performance in the Holocaust-themed drama "The Reader," Winslet also has a shot at a supporting-actress nomination this season.

If she got two nominations and lost both, Winslet would become the Oscar record-holder among actresses for most nominations without a win. Deborah Kerr and Thelma Ritter now

have the record with six nominations each and no wins.

Among actors, Peter O'Toole has had eight nominations without winning, while Richard Burton had seven without a win.

Winslet bluntly acknowledges that she wants an Oscar.

"I can't deny it would mean a huge deal. Whether that's going to happen ever in my life, of course, remains to be seen," said Winslet, who also shrugs off the prospect of becoming the all-time also-ran among actresses at the Oscars.

"I'm a very good loser. I've actually got it down, I think. I have a formula I could sell," Winslet said. "I'm 33 years old, for God's sake. I've been there five times before. It's been incredible every single time, and I'm nothing other than just genuinely amazed and truly, truly grateful to have had those moments in my life."

DiCaprio wants more for his co-star, though, answering candidly about whether Winslet should take home an Oscar.

"Absolutely," DiCaprio said. "Long overdue."

"Ditto," Winslet said of DiCaprio. "Dit-to."

'Sopranos' actor cleared of murder in NYPD death

NEW YORK (AP)—Lillo Brancato, who played a bumbling aspiring mobster on "The Sopranos," was cleared Monday of second-degree murder in the shooting death of an off-duty policeman during a drunken, late-night search for drugs.

The jury convicted Brancato of a lesser charge of attempted burglary. He faces a minimum of three years in prison on that count, but the former actor could get credit for time served because he has been behind bars about that long.

Brancato showed no reaction as the verdict was read—his face impassive, his fingers pressed together. His mother, seated a couple rows back in the gallery, began sobbing. Prosecutors say Brancato and accomplice Steven Armento broke into a basement apartment to steal pre-

scription drugs after a night of drinking at a strip club. Officer Daniel Enchaitegui, who lived next door, came out to investigate.

Armento blasted the 28-year-old officer with his .357 Magnum, hitting him in the heart. The dying officer fired back, wounding both men. Armento was convicted earlier this year of first-degree murder and was sentenced to life in prison without parole.

Yolanda Rosa Nazario, the victim's sister, said she was baffled by the verdict.

"What message is this sending out to the New York City police officers today? It's wrong," she said.

"This would not have hap-

pened if not for this animal's drug habit," said Patrolmen's Benevolent Association head

Patrick Lynch. "The only good thing is that this skunk is not walking out to spend Christmas with his family. The sad part is that neither is Daniel."

Brancato was led out of court in handcuffs. The next hearing is scheduled for Jan. 9.

Defense lawyer Joseph Tocino said his client was relieved with the verdict. "There was never going to be smiles," he said. "This is not a case that warrants that."

Tocino added: "This will be a second chance for him in life. ... Lillo's committed to taking advantage of it."

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 Wed 1:15 4:10 7:10

Will Smith, Rosario Dawson

Drama, Romance • Rated PG 13

Synopsis

Ben Thomas, an IRS agent with a fateful secret, embarks on an extraordinary journey of redemption by forever changing the lives of seven strangers.



The Tale of Despereaux

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 Saturday 1:00 4:00 7:00 9:45
 Sunday 1:00 4:00 7:00
 Mon and Tue 4:00 7:00
 Wed 1:00 4:00 7:00

Sigourney Weaver, Dustin Hoffman

Animated, Children • Rated G

Synopsis

In the faraway kingdom of Dor, four unlikely heroes emerge: Despereaux, a brave mouse banished to the dungeon for speaking with a human; Roscuro, a good-hearted rat who loves light and soup, but is exiled to darkness; Pea, a Princess in a gloomy castle who is prisoner to her father's grief; and Mig, a servant girl who longs to be a Princess, but is forced to serve the jailer.



Yes Man

Friday 4:20 7:05 9:35
 Saturday 1:05 4:20 7:05 9:35
 Sunday 1:05 4:20 7:05
 Mon and Tue 4:20 7:05
 Wed 1:05 4:20 7:05

Jim Carrey, Bradley Cooper

Comedy • Rated PG 13

Synopsis

Carl Allen's life is going nowhere—the operative word being "no"—until he signs up for a self-help program based on one simple covenant: say yes to everything—and anything. Unleashing the power of "YES" begins to transform Carl's life in amazing unexpected ways, getting him promoted at work and opening the door to a new romance.



The Day The Earth Stood Still

Friday 4:05 7:25 10:00
 Saturday 1:20 4:05 7:25 10:00
 Sunday 1:20 4:05 7:25
 Mon and Tue 4:05 7:25
 Wed 1:20 4:05 7:25

Keanu Reeves, Jennifer Connelly

Sci-Fi • Rated PG 13

Transporter 3

Friday 4:30 7:15 9:55
 Saturday 1:25 4:30 7:15 9:55
 Sunday 1:25 4:30 7:15
 Mon and Tue 4:30 7:15
 Wed 1:25 4:30 7:15

Jason Statham, Robert Berleand

Action, Crime, Sequel • Rated PG 13



Twilight

Friday 4:25 7:20 9:50
 Saturday 1:30 4:25 7:20 9:50
 Sunday 1:30 4:25 7:20
 Mon and Tue 4:25 7:20
 Wed 1:30 4:25 7:20

Kristen Stewart, Robert Pattinson

Drama, Thriller • Rated PG 13

Bolt

Friday 4:15 7:30 9:30
 Saturday 1:10 4:15 7:30 9:30
 Sunday 1:10 4:15 7:30
 Mon and Tue 4:15 7:30
 Wed 1:10 4:15 7:30

John Travolta, Miley Cyrus

Action, Animated • Rated PG

● NO PASSES ■ NO PASSES OR SUPER SAVERS

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Brancato

Concert industry posts record year

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP)—The stock market is in the tank, the plant is closing and the neighbor is losing his home ... the perfect time to go to a concert, by one measure.

The concert business grossed just under \$4 billion worldwide in 2008, the most ever for a year and up almost 13 percent over last year, according to Billboard magazine.

"Overall, it's been a pretty good year for touring," said Ray Waddell, who covers the industry for Billboard. "I'd never say it's recession-proof, but it's resilient."

In North America, the average box office gross was up 18 percent and the average attendance up 6.3 percent.

Bon Jovi's tour was the year's highest-grossing, based on the trade publication's data from Nov. 14, 2007, to Nov. 11 of this year. It grossed \$210.6 million and drew nearly 2.2 million fans.

Bruce Springsteen was second (\$204.5 million gross) followed by Madonna (\$162 million).

The most lucrative country tours were Kenny Chesney, sixth on the list with \$86 million gross; and Rascal Flatts, 10th with \$55.8 million.

"It's not something you can get a fix for somewhere else," Waddell said of live music. "There's no other substitute for it, and compared to other things, it's pretty affordable."



AP
In this July 12, 2008 file photo, Jon Bon Jovi performs during a free concert celebrating Major League Baseball All-Star Summer on Central Park's Great Lawn in New York.

Fans keep coming. First-week sales for Britney Spears' 2009 tour were strong enough that extra dates were added, and AC/DC and Metallica

have already sold out shows for January and February.

Last month, concert promoter giant Live Nation reported third-quarter profit more than tripled

to \$139.9 million.

But Waddell warned: "It would be crazy to think that the economy and unemployment won't impact ticket sales at some point."

The squeeze may already be on in some places. In Nashville, promoters blamed slow ticket sales for canceling a New Year's Eve concert at the Sommet Center featuring Trace Adkins and Lynyrd Skynyrd.

John Huie, vice president of Creative Artists Agency in Nashville, which sets tour schedules for Tim McGraw, Faith Hill, Keith Urban, Alan Jackson, ZZ Top and many others, said more fans are waiting until the day of the show to buy tickets because they're uncertain about the economy.

Gary Bongiovanni, editor-in-chief of the concert industry publication Pollstar, noted that most of the tickets for shows in October, November and even December were sold in advance, before the latest round of bad economic news. The full effect won't be felt until next year, he predicted.

"The problem will be if we're still in this economic environment when summer hits, when so many acts go on the road," Bongiovanni said. "Even in good times the public has a hard time supporting them all, and obviously when people are unemployed they're not going to be buying concert tickets."

Same-sex marriage introduces unique question of etiquette

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
FROM UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DEAR ABBY: I hope you can help with an etiquette question. With same-sex marriage becoming more commonplace, how should I address a letter to a same-sex couple?

Example: Now that Ellen DeGeneres has married Portia de Rossi, would I write to "Mrs. and Mrs. Ellen DeGeneres"? "The Ellen DeGeneres Family"? or "Ellen and Portia DeGeneres"? None of the manners books that I have checked has been able to provide an answer, and I have not seen the issue in print. What do you think?

STRAIGHT, NOT NARROW IN GLENDALE, ARIZ.



Dear Abby

DEAR STRAIGHT, NOT NARROW: Because this topic is so new, there isn't one hard-and-fast answer to your question. Some couples keep or change their individual names, some join their names together with a hyphen, others select a name together and adopt it.

If you have a question about how a particular couple would prefer their mail to be addressed, my advice is to ask them.

■ ■ ■
DEAR ABBY: While I was visiting with a relative recently, she informed me that my late husband, "John," who died several years ago, had been having an affair. I was so shocked, I did not respond.

John and I married young and experienced good times and bad, but we were happy together—or so I thought. I live in a small town with many friends and relatives. Needless to say, my heart is broken. I don't know how to respond, or if I should. Why would someone be so hurtful?

HEARTBROKEN IN OKLAHOMA

DEAR HEARTBROKEN: Your relative is either malicious or a thoughtless motormouth, and what she said may not be true. Respond by treating her as if she has a contagious disease, because in a sense she does. The disease she spreads is misery.

If YOU think you and John had a happy life together, then you did. If John may have lapsed once along the way, forgive him because, in the final analysis, you two made it to the finish line together. Many couples do not.

■ ■ ■
DEAR ABBY: After 30 years as an automotive transmission builder, I retired. I am blessed with a loving wife, three grown kids, beautiful 10-year-old twin granddaughters, a sugar-sweet beagle, three ungrateful, sassy cats and two time-consuming hobbies. Sounds perfect, doesn't it?

The downside is that eight out of 10 nights, I dream about my previous job. I drift around in the clouds rebuilding transmissions, putting a spring here, a valve there. I'd rather be dreaming about more interesting things—hunting, fishing and women—not necessarily in that order.

Can you tell me how to redirect my dreams and enjoy my sleep? Do other tradesmen such as butchers, bakers and candlestick-makers relive their old trades in dreamland?

ONCE A MECHANIC ... IN ARIZONA

DEAR ONCE A MECHANIC: Your letter shows you can take a mechanic out of the trade, but you can't necessarily take the trade out of the mechanic, butcher, baker, candlestick-maker—or advice columnist, for that matter. If someone has performed a job long enough, it becomes part of him or her. Of one thing I am certain: The harder one tries NOT to dream about something, the more he or she will.

We cannot control our subconscious—but we can redirect it. An hour before bedtime, try leafing through magazines about hunting and fishing, or photo albums with pictures of your granddaughters. This may guide your thoughts in a more desirable direction as you drift off to dreamland. And should you find yourself once more at your workbench after nodding off, try this: Tell yourself, "OK, it's time to change the channel." It has worked for me.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write *Dear Abby* at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

What teens need to know about sex, drugs, AIDS and getting along with peers and parents is in "What Every Teen Should Know." To order, send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$6 (U.S. funds) to: *Dear Abby—Teen Booklet*, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

ENTERTAINMENT TIDBITS

Court agrees to pay Spears' father \$75/hour

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A court has put a higher value on being Britney Spears' father this year: about \$75 an hour. For helping his daughter through her turbulent period, Jamie Spears on Monday was awarded an additional \$51,000 payout, reflecting an increase in his monthly payments since he took over his 27-year-old daughter's affairs in February. Jamie Spears had been receiving \$10,000 a month for his work, but Los Angeles Superior Court Commissioner Reva Goetz increased that amount to approximately \$16,000 per month and agreed to give him backpay. He was also granted an additional \$1,200 monthly payment so he can maintain and office, which Goetz said was justified by his work getting his daughter's personal life—and music career—back on track.

Actors guild delays vote on strike authorization

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The Screen Actors Guild has delayed a vote that would give the union the power to call a strike and bring the entertainment business to a virtual halt. SAG announced Monday night it would delay sending out the ballots until Jan. 14 at the earliest. SAG had planned to send

strike authorization ballots to more than 100,000 union members on Jan. 2, a date that would have put Oscar night within reach of a potential boycott. It was not immediately clear how long the vote would be delayed. The decision comes more than a week after a New York faction of the union spoke out against the vote, noting the industry's economic struggles. SAG leaders have been pushing for the vote amid stalled contract negotiations with Hollywood studios.

David Spade helps Phoenix police buy rifles

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The Phoenix Police Department has gotten some high-powered goodies courtesy of actor David Spade. The one-time Phoenix resident donated \$100,000 so that the department can buy approximately 50 AR-15 rifles. Spade said he wanted to make the donation after seeing a TV news report about Phoenix officers having to buy their own rifles.

Spade grew up in the Phoenix area and graduated from Arizona State University. Phoenix Police Sgt. Alan Hill says the rifles will be given to patrol officers and that the agency was grateful for the gifts. "These guys need to be able to do their jobs and I am just happy I could help," Spade said in a statement released by his publicist.

Grosses tumble at a Piven-less 'Speed-the-Plow'

NEW YORK (AP)—Business tumbled last week for the Broadway revival of "Speed-the-Plow," now without the services of Jeremy Piven who abruptly quit the show after saying he was suffering from mercury poisoning. The David Mamet comedy grossed \$326,559, down nearly \$160,000 from the previous week, according to figures released Monday by the Broadway League, the industry's trade organization. The show played to about 50 percent capacity at the Ethel Barrymore Theatre. Piven was replaced by his understudy, Jordan Lage, for eight performances. Norbert Leo Butz joins the production Tuesday. Butz is in the show through Jan. 11, after which William H. Macy takes over the part through Feb. 22. Mamet's scathing satire about Hollywood also stars Raul Esparza and Elisabeth Moss.

Kirsten Dunst granted restraining order

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Kirsten Dunst has won a court's protection from a man who she says has recently trespassed at her home. Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Richard E. Rico granted Dunst's request to order 25-year-old Christopher R. Smith to stay away from the actress, her personal assistant and any place

they work. Dunst did not appear during Monday's court hearing. The request was granted without her attorney or witnesses having to make arguments. Smith did not attend the hearing and never responded to a temporary restraining order Dunst received in November. Dunst, who has appeared in three "Spider-Man" films, wrote last month that she was "quite frightened" of Smith. He was arrested by Dunst's assistant last month after trespassing at her house.

Paolini, Pullman with books coming to iPhones

NEW YORK (AP)—Christopher Paolini's "Brisingr," Philip Pullman's "His Dark Materials" trilogy and Peter Matthiessen's award-winning "Shadow Country" are among the dozen-plus books coming to the iPhone and to iPod Touch, publisher Random House Inc. announced Monday. "We are pleased to be making this initial list of outstanding books by some of our top-selling authors available to a ground-breaking group of readers," Matt Shatz, Random House's vice president for digital books, said in a statement. Random House recently announced it was adding thousands of books to its digital catalog and has said that e-sales more than tripled in 2008, although the electronic market remains a tiny part of the overall book market.

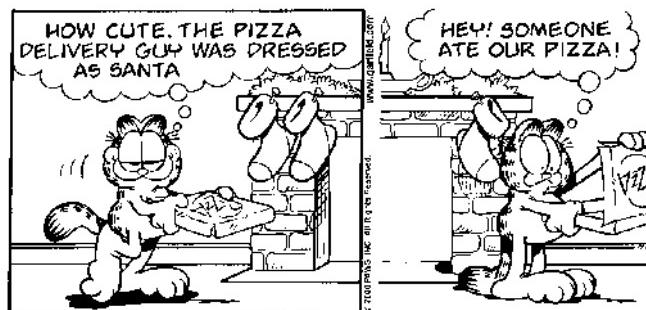
Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes



By Bill Waterson

Garfield®



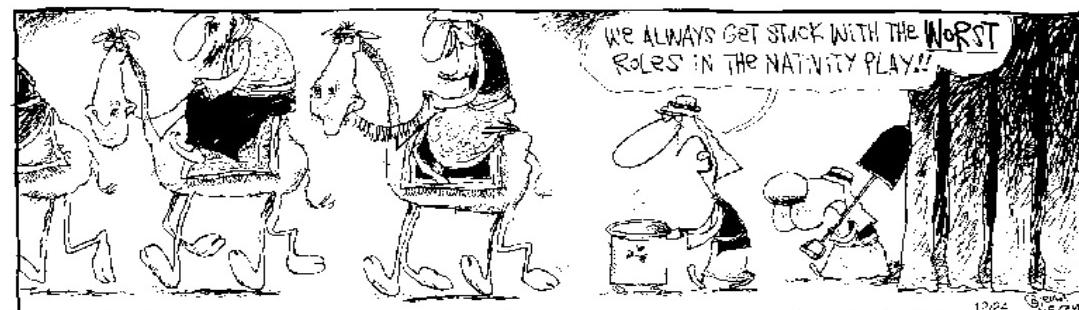
By Jim Davis

Adam@home



By Bryan Basset

The Duplex



By Glenn McCoy

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	43	Apportion	4	City	27	TV
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4 Spring	46	Battery	50	Sincere	28	City fleet
8 Saharan	terminal	55	Exclude	6	Judge	29
12 Sweet potato	56	Anger	56	Lance	base	Gumbo
13 Aware of	57	Dog	57	7	Privation	30
14 — contendere	58	bane	58	Blacksmiths'	Form of transpor-	transportation
15 Id counter-part	59	impos-sible"	59	blocks	31	Color quality
16 Dime portrait	60	Remain	9	Cav ar	35	Drumming noise
18 Not limp	61	Revue	10	Not up	38	Fish-eating hawk
20 Tackle moguls	62	segment	11	to par	40	Chaps
21 Exploding star	63	Make	12	Morse "E"	42	Illustrations
24 Nudge	64	lace	17	— out a living	45	Slays,
28 Midwest-ern farmland	65	DOWN	19	Hostel	46	"Sopranos" style
32 Rescue	66	Watchful	20	22	Perp. to one	47
33 Wanted-poster letters	67	one	21	Perp. to hor.	48	Last write-up
34 Ann —, Mich.	68	2 Creche	22	23	49	Formerly, formerly
36 —relief	69	Photo book	24	25	50	Storefront sign abbr.
37 Vivacity, in music	70	3 Urban	26	Infant pall	51	Chow down
39 Dell lunch order	71	4 Ellipse	27	52 — Khan	52	— Khan
41 Iaco topping	72	5 Ellipsis	28	53 Wapiti	53	Wahine's garland
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	102	35 Ellipsis	58			
	103	36 Ellipsis	59			
	104	37 Ellipsis	60			
	105	38 Ellipsis	61			

Solution time: 21 mins.



CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Ryan Seacrest, 34; Ricky Martin, 37; Diedrich Bader, 42; Mary Higgins Clark, 81

Happy Birthday: Take a long hard look at your situation—be prepared to jump ship if necessary or take on whatever appears to be your best bet financially. Rely on your personality and good track record to get you what you want. A personal decision regarding your health, well-being and lifestyle will ensure you stay in good shape for things to come. Your numbers are 9, 13, 19, 27, 31, 35, 43

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Quiet time must be scheduled in. Pace yourself and don't turn down any help being offered. Someone will criticize you if you spend too much or take on too many duties. ☀☀☀

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): See as many of your friends as possible. Book a trip or surprise everyone with an early arrival and you will gain some quality time with people you love. Now is the time to have fun. ☀☀

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Love and romance are in the stars. Share your joy and your plans with someone who is just as much into you as you are into him or her. If you are single, you are likely to meet someone new through an old friend or relative. ☀☀

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Don't worry about the money aspect of the holiday season if there is nothing you can do about it. Enjoy what's being offered and offer what you can in return. This is not a contest, it's a time of love, peace and sharing. ☀☀

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): If someone is playing games with you, take a pass. A change may be required. You'll be upset if someone isn't truthful with you. Talk your way through problems. ☀☀

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): If you need to travel to be with the people you enjoy most, do so. It's up to you to be the go-between if someone isn't getting along. Your ability to be a team player will help even things out. ☀☀

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Volunteer your services or donate to a cause you believe in. Your generosity will enhance your reputation and introduce you to people who can assist you in the future. Open your doors to friends and family. ☀☀

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Don't be tricked into thinking that someone is on the same page as you. Consider if you have been fair in the way you presented your intentions. A little space may be required to get a clearer picture of where you stand. ☀☀☀

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Enjoy the younger people in your life. You may want to get back into an old hobby or activity. A couple of quick changes and you will have everyone you wanted to do something nice for covered. Don't get involved in a family feud. ☀☀

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Visit friends or get out with colleagues. Staying home or dealing with personal problems you haven't been able to resolve will be a waste of time. Overindulgence will set you back personally, emotionally and financially. ☀☀

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): If someone is playing games with you, take a pass. A change may be required. You'll be upset if someone isn't truthful with you. Talk your way through problems. ☀☀

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EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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people who can assist you in the future. Open your doors to friends and family. ☀☀

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Spend time with people who mean a lot to you. You will give you an opportunity to show how much you care. An opportunity to get involved in something different will help you down the road. ☀☀

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Don't let your emotions give away a secret you must keep. You have to be fair to the people who count in your life by sharing with them and them alone. Your strength will help someone you care about do better. ☀☀

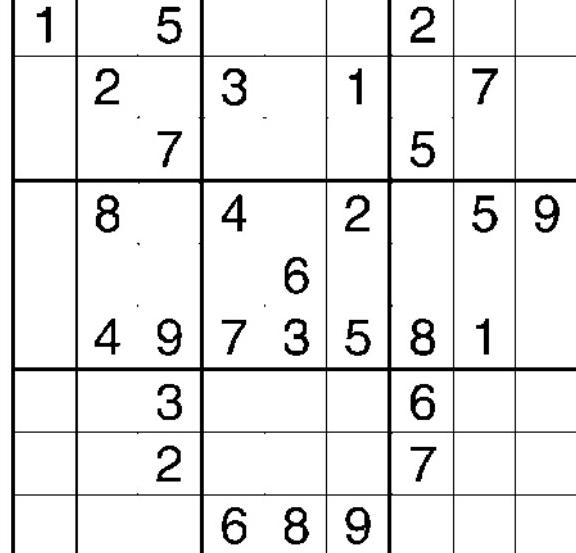
Birthday Baby: You can take on a challenge and win. You are quick to react and often choose the most unlikely path. You are a strong contender and an incredibly hard worker.

Eugenia's Web sites: astroadvice.com for fun, eugenialast.com for confidential consultations

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

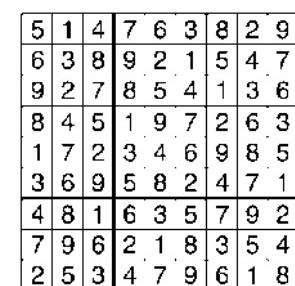
By Dave Green



Difficulty Level ★★★

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer



Difficulty Level ★★★

WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle—horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

REINDEER TRAILS



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Blitzem, Buck, Children, Comet, Cupid, Dancer, December, Doridor, Eight, Fir, and, Flying, Gurnies, Geo, Glow, Gracious, Hero, Holiday, Houses, Laugh, Lead, Lights, Live, Magic, Mir,ature, Nick, North, Nose, Play, Pole, Prancer, Pulling, Rapid, Rudolph, Sacks, Scandinavia, Secret, Snow, Songs, Speedy, Stars, Thunder, Toys, Vixen, Wh,ile, Wind, World

Yesterday's Answer: Fountain

For answers to today's crossword, call 1-800-226-5956! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ or y.) A King Features service, NYC.

STUMPED?

For answers to today's crossword, call 1-800-226-5956! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ or y.) A King Features service, NYC.

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CLASSIFIED ADS


FOR RENT - RESIDENTIAL

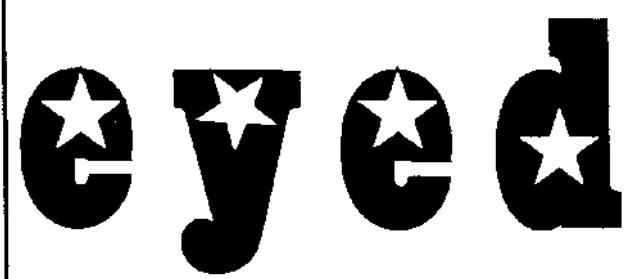
Fina Sisu Apt., 2-BR, FF, AC, 24-hr pwr/water, security, laundry room, free Wi-Fi & ample parking. MIHA applicants accepted. Right behind NMC campus. Special rates for NMC faculty/students. Call 235-6527/8 or 285-1317 for info.

WANTED TO LEASE

Looking for property with nice oceanview to lease, preferably direct from land owner. Please contact 483-9984

WHATZIT?

Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.



Find today's solution in this section

WHATZIT Solution: Starry-eyed

LOST PASSPORT

Name : Zhao Riquan
D.O.B : Sept. 18, 1955
Passport No. : P.2067474
Contact No. : 483-8085

DRUNK DRIVING

Over the limit. Under arrest.

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

The Estate of MATEO M. TAISACAN and) CIVIL ACTION

The Estate of SABINA M. TAISACAN)

Plaintiffs,) NO. 08-0099

-v-)

JUAN B. QUITUGUA,)

Defendants.)

SUMMONS FOR PUBLICATION

TO THE ABOVE-NAMED DEFENDANT:

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file any answer you wish to make to the Complaint, a copy of which is served upon you hereby, within twenty-one (21) days after the fourth publication of this Summons, and to deliver or mail a copy of your answer to The Law Offices of Michael A. White, LLC, the Plaintiffs Attorneys, whose address is P.O. Box 5222, Saipan, MP 96950, as soon as practicable after filing Your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Courts for filing.

Your answer should be in writing and filed with the Clerk of this Court at Susupe, Saipan. It may be prepared and signed for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of this Court by messenger or mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice. If you fail to answer in accordance with this summons, judgment by default may be taken against you for the relief demanded in the Complaint.

By order of the above court:

/s/ Deputy Clerk of Court

Dated this 3rd day of December, 2008:

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

BANKPACIFIC, LTD.,) CIVIL ACTION

Plaintiff,) NO.

vs.) 08-0069 BE

REGINA C. TORRES a/k/a) NOTICE

REGINA ANN TORRES) OF SALE

BLANCO,)

Defendant.)

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, pursuant to an Order issued by the Court in this matter on December 2, 2008, I will sell, at public auction to the highest bidder, on the terms and conditions set forth hereinbelow, all of the right, title, and interest of Defendant in and to the following property: Lot No. 011 G 1044 containing an area of 796 square meters, more or less, as shown on the Division of Lands and Surveys Official Cadastral Plat No. 011 G 19, dated December 3, 1993, Commonwealth Recorder's File No. 93-4287, dated December 9, 1993.

Date, Time and Place of Sale. The sale will be held on 2nd, January, 2009, at the hour of 3:00 p.m., at Carlsbad Building, Isa Drive, Capitol Hill, P.O. Box 5241, Saipan, MP 96950-5241. The sale will be opened to general public.

Terms and Conditions of Sale. The Terms and Conditions of Sale may be obtained from the undersigned, either prior to or at the sale. These terms and conditions shall govern the conduct of the sale.

DATED: Saipan, MP, December 5, 2008.

CARLSPHILM BALL LLP
/s/ Vincent J. Seman, F0361
Attorney for Plaintiff
BankPacifi, Ltd.

CLASSIFIEDS RATES AND POLICIES

Saipan Tribune's Classifieds Section gives you the right exposure without hurting your pockets. Stretch your dollar and get results.

CLASSIFIED ADS

Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 7-day run on both print and online edition, for as low as \$25 per 3 liner ad for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of below packages that fits your budget.

ADS (7DAYS)

COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
\$25
\$35
\$45
\$55

ADVERTISING DEADLINE

Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Saturday And Sunday Issues:

- *Saipan Tribune: All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on either Sunday or Monday issues.*

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. Saipan Tribune reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

ADVERTISING POLICY

All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

www.saipantribune.com

Yao gets best of Yi as Rockets dominate Nets



EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. (AP)—While Yao Ming won the showdown with fellow Chinese Olympian Yi Jianlian, the Houston Rockets beat the New Jersey Nets with defense and a boost from the smallest player on the court.

Yao had 24 points and 16 rebounds and Aaron Brooks tied his career high with 22 points as the Rockets won their season-high fourth straight game with a 114-91 victory over the Nets on Monday night in a game televised live to China.

"Yao played big minutes and they didn't have any answer for him," Rockets coach Rick Adelman said.

The Nets didn't have any answers at all in losing for the sixth time in eight games.

With Yao clogging the lane, the Rockets limited the Nets to a season-low 13 points in the first quarter and were never threatened again. Houston shot 58 percent for the game, including 9-of-19 from 3-point range.

The Rockets totally shut down the Nets' 1-2 punch of Devin Harris and Vince Carter, limiting them to 10 points apiece on 7-of-24 shooting with no 3-pointers. They had a combined scoring average of 47.3 points entering the game, the highest scoring backcourt in the league.

"Devin and Vince are very good players and we were able to defend them," Yao said. "That's how we won the game. If we play defense like that, there is less pressure on me. We were in a lot of help defenses and we all helped out to shut those guys down."

Yi also struggled in the game against his countryman, scoring 10 points on 4 of 13 shooting.

Brooks was outstanding in providing some unexpected offense. The 6-footer started for the fifth straight game and hit 8 of 14 shots, including 4 of 7 from 3-point range. His first long ball banked in.

"If I can bank a three, then I know I can make the next one on my own," Brooks said. "I had some good looks. Yao and T-Mac command so much attention that makes it easier for me."

Adelman said Brooks is starting to find himself in his second season.

"With Aaron I always felt he was going to do a very good job," Adelman said. "The most important thing was that he got confidence and become aggressive and not afraid to take shots. It's going to bode well for him in the future."

Keyon Dooling had 17 points to lead New Jersey, which trailed by 27 points in the second half.

"This was a tough one," Carter said. "This was a tough night for us. We definitely needed a win. This was an opportunity for us to see where we are and how

far we have come."

The 10 points were a season-low for Harris, who has emerged as one of the league's top point guards less than a year after being acquired in a trade for Jason Kidd.

Tracy McGrady added 12 points, six rebounds and four assists for the Rockets, who won for the eighth time in 10 games. Carl Landry added 13 points.

Houston never trailed after McGrady hit a jumper to snap a 4-all tie. Luis Scola scored in the lane against Yi and Brooks followed with his banked 3-pointer to push the lead to 11-4.

After Yi followed a miss by Harris, Brooks converted a four-point play and McGrady hit two free throws to give Houston a 17-6 lead.

Brooks finished with 11 points in the quarter, and closing out the period by setting up Landry for a layup in the final seconds for one of the six assists by the 6-footer.

"They came out with a little more energy," Harris said. "We looked dead tonight."

Houston led by 23 points in the second quarter and the Nets never got closer than 16 in the third. The fourth quarter was

mostly garbage time for the reserves.

Lakers 105, Grizzlies 96

At Memphis, Tennessee, Kobe Bryant scored 36 points and keyed a late rally to help the Los Angeles Lakers snap a two-game losing streak with a victory over the Grizzlies.

The Lakers trailed by 93-88 with 3:08 left, but closed the game on a 17-3 run, including 10 points from Bryant to overtake the Grizzlies down the stretch.

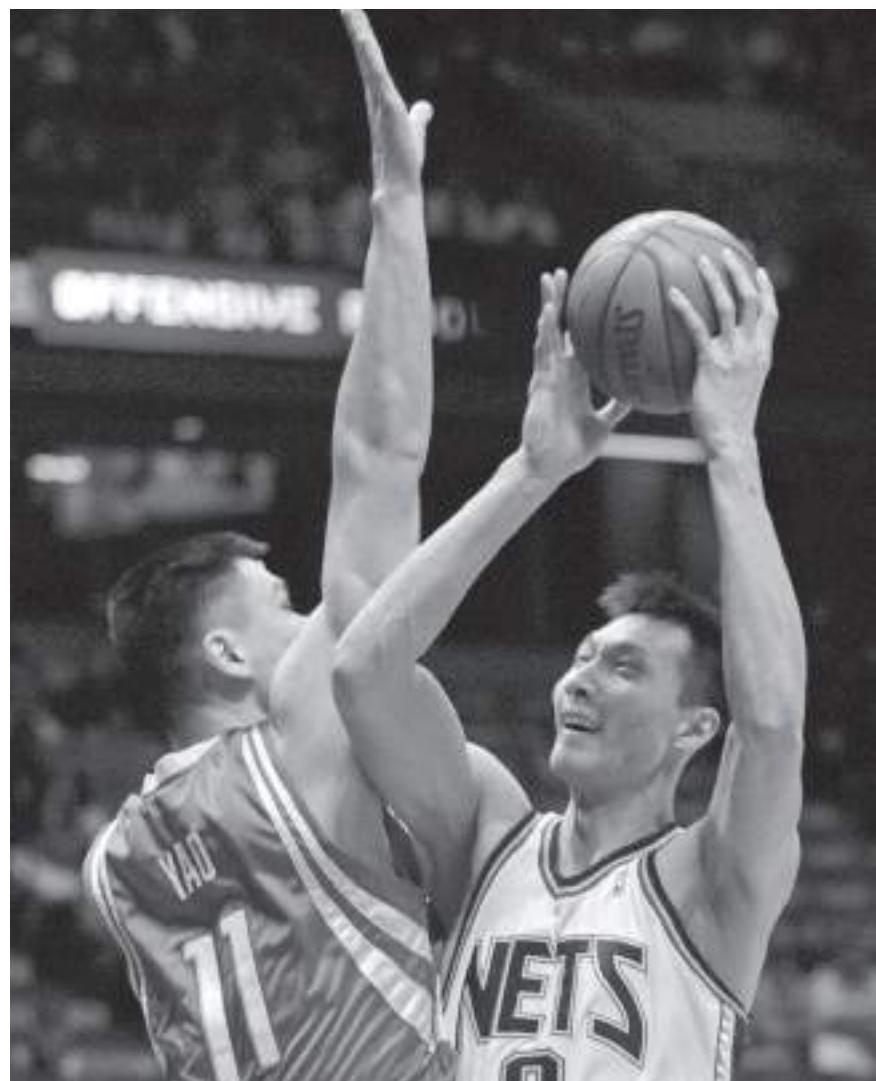
Bryant was 14-of-23 from the field, part of Los Angeles shooting 54 percent on the night.

Pau Gasol had 15 points, seven rebounds and had six assists in his return to Memphis. Gasol played six-plus seasons with the Grizzlies before being traded to Los Angeles in February.

Rudy Gay led Memphis with 23 points.

Magic 113, Warriors 81

At Orlando, Florida, Jameer Nelson scored 22 points going 9-for-9 from the field to help the Magic rout the Warriors.



New Jersey Nets' Yi Jianlian, right, of China, attempts a shot as Houston Rockets' Yao Ming, of China, defends during the first quarter of an NBA basketball game Monday night, Dec. 22, 2008, in East Rutherford, N.J. AP

Yanks have \$26.9 million luxury tax



NEW YORK (AP)—

The New York Yankees not only failed to make the playoffs, they were hit with their highest luxury tax in three years. The Yankees were assessed a \$26.9 million tax by the commissioner's office on Monday, up from \$23.9 million last year and their biggest bill since paying nearly \$34 million for 2005. The Detroit Tigers, who also failed to qualify for the postseason, are the only other team that must pay tax and owe \$1.3 million to the commissioner's office. Checks are due by Jan. 31.

Both teams got little for what they spent. The Yankees' streak of 13 consecutive playoff appearances ended, and

they finished third in the AL East at 89-73, prompting them to spend nearly a quarter-billion dollars to sign pitchers CC Sabathia and A.J. Burnett.

Detroit entered the year with lofty expectations after acquiring Miguel Cabrera and Dontrelle Willis but went 74-88 and finished last in the AL Central.

While the Yankees pay at a 40 percent rate for the amount over \$155 million, the Tigers pay at a 22.5 percent rate because they exceeded the specified threshold for the first time.

This year's figure brings the Yankees' total tax to \$148.3 million in the six seasons since it began—90 percent of the total.

Before this year, the only other

teams to pay were the Boston Red Sox, who owed \$13.9 million for exceeding the threshold in four seasons, and the Los Angeles Angels, who paid \$927,000 in 2004.

New York's payroll was \$222.2 million and Detroit was second at \$160.8 million for the purpose of the luxury tax. To compute it, Major League Baseball uses the average annual values of contracts for players on 40-man rosters and adds benefits.

The threshold rose from \$148 million last year to \$155 million this season. It goes up to \$162 million next year and rises by \$8 million in each of the following two seasons.

Nelson had 13 points and four assists in the third period when the Magic blew open a close game with a 22-9 run on their way to their fifth straight win of the season.

Rashard Lewis scored 21 points and Dwight Howard added 11 points and 11 rebounds for the Magic, who held Golden State to just 31.9 percent shooting for the game.

Jamal Crawford led the Warriors with 18 points, but was 7-for-21 from the field.

Spurs 101, Kings 85

At San Antonio, Tony Parker committed five turnovers in the first 10 minutes but overcame the rough start by scoring 18 points to lead the hosts to victory over the reeling Kings.

Parker was 8-of-17 from the floor and added six assists in 28 minutes as San Antonio (17-10) won for the eighth time in 10 games. The Spurs shot 52 percent and led from the 5:38 mark of the first quarter. They were 7-of-15 from the 3-point line.

Sacramento (7-22) was held to 40 percent shooting in its fourth loss in a row. The Kings are 3-17 since opening the season 4-5. They dropped to 2-13 on the road.

Raptors 97, Clippers 75

At Los Angeles, Chris Bosh scored 18 of his 31 points in the fourth quar-

ter as the Raptors beat the Clippers to snap a five-game losing streak.

Zach Randolph had 19 points and eight rebounds for Los Angeles during a foul-plagued 28 minutes, and left the game with 10:44 to play after bruising his left knee in a collision with Jake Voskuhl on a layup.

Jermaine O'Neal added 23 points and nine rebounds for Toronto.

Rookie Eric Gordon also scored 19 points for the Clippers, coming off a 119-85 drubbing at Milwaukee that ended their 2-2 road trip.

Nuggets 97, Trail Blazers 89

At Denver, Nene scored 19 points and had 11 rebounds, while Chauncey Billups added 19 points and 10 assists as the Nuggets overcame the absence of Carmelo Anthony to beat the Trail Blazers.

Five players scored in double figures for the Nuggets, who ended a three-game losing streak.

LaMarcus Aldridge had 20 points and Travis Outlaw had 15 for the Trail Blazers. Brandon Roy, who scored 52 points against Phoenix on Thursday, was held to eight.

Anthony sat out with what the Nuggets called a right elbow contusion, which has bothered him since training camp. He will also miss Tuesday's game in Portland and Friday's home game against Philadelphia.

NBA BRIEFS

Anthony out for 2 games with sore elbow

DENVER (AP)—The Denver Nuggets say Carmelo Anthony will sit out the next two games with a sore right elbow. The team said Monday the All-Star forward may return Friday against Philadelphia. Anthony has been hampered by the injury since training camp and it's grown progressively worse in the past few weeks. He was held to 10 points on 3-of-13 shooting in a loss to Phoenix on Saturday. Anthony is averaging 20.5 points and 7.4 rebounds this season. The Nuggets play host to Portland Monday and are at Portland on Tuesday.

Thunder sign Krstic to offer sheet

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP)—The Oklahoma City Thunder made a bid to fill their void at center Monday by signing former New

Jersey Nets center Nenad Krstic to an offer sheet. The Nets' 2002 first-round pick has been playing in Russia this season after receiving a qualifying offer from New Jersey. The Nets have seven days to match Oklahoma City's offer, or the 7-foot Serbian would be free to join the Thunder. Krstic averaged 11.3 points and 5.7 rebounds in four seasons with the Nets. Oklahoma City has three 7-footers on its roster, but none have proven to be the answer. The oft-injured Robert Swift has been hurt most of the season again this year, while Johan Petro has meandered in and out of the starting lineup with little production. Mouhammed Sene had knee surgery in April and has not played this season, although he's no longer listed among the Thunder's injured players. Nick Collison has been the most reliable solution at center although he's undersized at 6-10.

Wang and Yanks agree to \$5 million, 1-year deal

NEW YORK (AP)—Pitcher Chien-Ming Wang and the New York Yankees avoided salary arbitration when they agreed Monday to a \$5 million, one-year contract.

The 28-year-old right-hander was 8-2 with a 4.07 ERA in 15 starts last season before injuring a foot while running the bases at Houston in mid-June. He did not return.

Wang made \$4 million last sea-

son after losing in salary arbitration. He had asked for \$4.6 million.

His agreement raises the Yankees' payroll to about \$164 million for 15 players for next year. That includes pitcher Andrew Brackman and infielder Juan Miranda, who don't figure to be on the major league roster.

Outfielders Melky Cabrera and Xavier Nady, and reliever Brian Bruney remain eligible for arbitration.

Bears rally to beat Packers in OT, 20-17



CHICAGO (AP)—Alex Brown reached up and saved the Chicago Bears' season.

Brown blocked Mason Crosby's 38-yard attempt with 18 seconds to go in the fourth quarter Monday night, forcing overtime against the Green Bay Packers.

And once the Bears got to the extra period, reliable Robbie Gould kicked a 38-yard field goal for a 20-17 win.

Now, after the icy victory, the Bears are still in the running for the playoffs.

"We got a great push from a lot of different people. I was just the one who got my hand on it," Brown said.

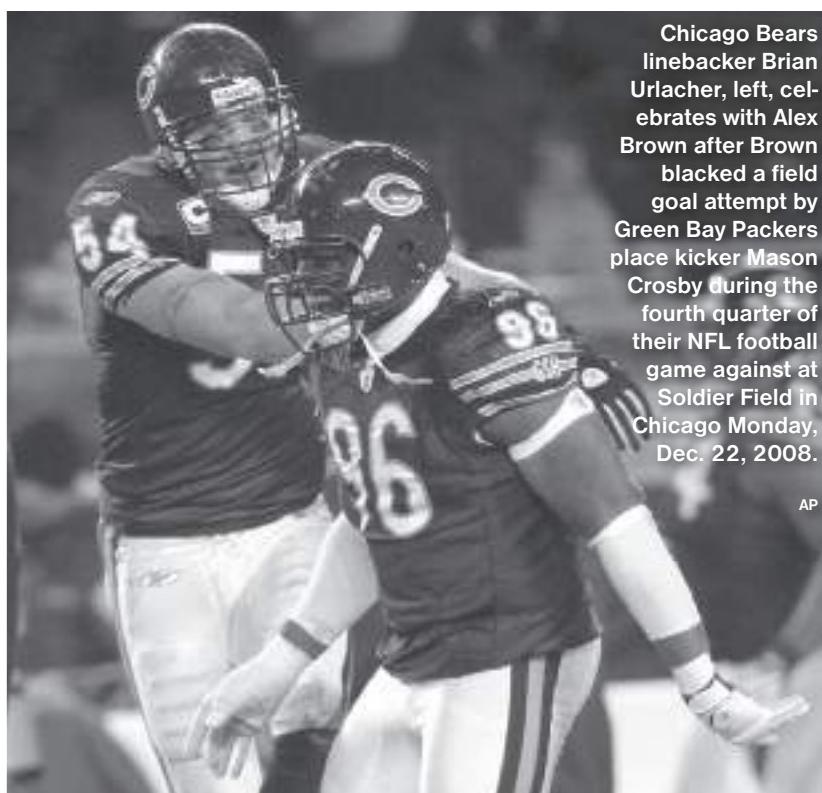
"We were saying on the sidelines that we have to block it. I got through pretty good but I didn't really think that was going to happen. You just go as hard as you can and see if you can get a hand up and hopefully you can get it."

The Bears (9-6), who stayed in contention for the NFC North over the weekend when Atlanta beat Minnesota, won their third straight and rallied from a 14-3 halftime deficit to do it.

If the Bears win at Houston next Sunday and the Vikings lose at home to the Giants, Chicago captures the NFC North. Minnesota holds the tiebreaker over the Bears, so if both teams win on the final Sunday, the Vikings win the division. But Chicago is still alive for a wild-card berth, too.

"Everything fell right, gave us a lot of momentum and energy coming into this game. We just had to carry it all the way through," quarterback Kyle Orton said.

And the Bears had to overcome the elements, too, as did the Packers.



Chicago Bears linebacker Brian Urlacher, left, celebrates with Alex Brown after Brown blocked a field goal attempt by Green Bay Packers place kicker Mason Crosby during the fourth quarter of their NFL football game against at Soldier Field in Chicago Monday, Dec. 22, 2008.

AP

The temperature at Soldier Field was announced at 2 degrees, making it the coldest home game in Bears' history since records started being kept in 1963. The wind chill was 13 below, the second-lowest in recorded team annals, so the longtime rivals known for their ability to play in cold weather were tested by the elements.

Orton hit a 17-yard pass to Greg Olsen and a 15-yard penalty on Green Bay's Aaron Rouse for a horse collar tackle gave the Bears the ball at the Green Bay 35 in overtime. A third-down pass of 14 yards to Matt Forte

got it to the Green Bay 20 to set up the winning kick - Gould's second straight game-winner in overtime.

"You know it's going to be chilly, the ground is going to be hard. You've just got to go out there and do your job. There's no excuses for missing," Gould said

Green Bay (5-10) dominated the first half, but lost its fifth straight after routing the Bears 37-3 at Lambeau Field in mid-November.

"It's disappointing. It's tough. It's frustrating," Green Bay quarterback Aaron Rodgers said.

Forte's 3-yard TD with 3:11 left lifted the Bears into a tie. The score came one play after Forte just made a first down on a fourth-and-2 run.

But on the ensuing kickoff, Green Bay's Will Blackmon returned a short kick 32 yards and a personal foul on Chicago's Adrian Peterson for tackling him out of bounds, put the ball on the Bears 35.

Rodgers' third down pass of 9 yards to James Jones gave the Packers a first down at the Bears 24 with two minutes left.

The Packers ran down the clock behind the running of Ryan Grant, moving to the 20 and trying to set up a game-winner from Crosby, but Brown blocked the kick.

"I have been hitting the ball well this year and I have been making kicks and it just didn't fall our way this game," Crosby said. "Everything has to be right and I just didn't finish my end of the deal."

In the first half, Rodgers had plenty of time to throw and completed 16 of 24 passes for 176 yards, throwing TD passes to Greg Jennings and Grant as Green Bay moved ahead 14-3.

He finished 24-of-39 for 260 yards.

The Bears, meanwhile, sputtered and were outgained 221-48 in the first two quarters as their playoff hopes were on the verge of evaporating into the cold air.

"There was a lot of talk going on in the offensive huddle 'we've got to do it now.' We weren't playing good," Orton said. "We weren't running the ball. We weren't throwing the ball. We

just weren't playing well at all. We just said, 'This is our season. It's coming down to this. And if we don't do anything, we're done.'"

Charles Woodson's sixth interception of the season and a return to the 30 helped the Packers move to the 5, but the Bears held and forced a 28-yard field goal from Crosby that put Green Bay up 17-10 early in the final quarter.

Forte, who had only 20 yards rushing through the first three quarters, broke off a 28-yard run to the Packers 23 late in the final quarter. Forte had two more carries to give Chicago a first down at the 12. Two more runs by Forte and a pass to Devin Hester left the Bears with a fourth-and-2 from the Packers 4 with just under four minutes left. Forte just got the first down and the Bears were able to tie it.

Chicago got a break on its first possession of the third quarter when Brad Maynard's punt hit Green Bay's Jarrett Bush, who was blocking on the play, and the Bears' Jason Davis recovered at the 27. Three plays after a 21-yard pass to Desmond Clark, Orton hit Olsen on a 3-yard TD pass, making it 14-10.

Using some trickery, the Packers moved in for a 7-0 lead with 6:21 left in the second quarter.

The Packers faked a punt on a fourth-and-2 from the Bears 37, snapping the ball to backup quarterback Matt Flynn, who carried 6 yards for the first down.

From there Grant carried four straight times for 24 yards to the 7. And on a third down, Rogers found Jennings with the TD pass that capped the 14-play, 91-yard drive.

December to Remember

42" PLASMA TV

\$2995 per week

37" LCD TV

\$2595 per week

KARAOKE SYSTEMS

\$1495 per week

DESKTOP PC

\$2395 per week

COMPUTER

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Wii

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\$2395 per week

XBOX 360

\$1895 per week

32" LCD TV

\$2395 per week

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Reserved Parking in Rear

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637-RENT
Behind Johndel's Supermarket

SAIPAN
Middle Road
234-RENT
Next to Subway

Grateful GTC extends kudos to RGA



Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary School recently thanked Refaluwasch

Golf Association for donating proceeds from its Inaugural Memorial Classic to the San Roque school.

"The RGA with the help of its members, tournament participants, tournament sponsors, GTC staff volunteers, and GTC PTA volunteers raised \$3,500. This substantial amount of money was given directly to the GTC PTA and will be dispersed to the school through that organization," said GTC acting vice principal Martin Dalsaso.

He added that the generosity and philanthropic spirit of all who contributed to the worthwhile and worthy event deserves a huge *binadu thank you*.

"A special thanks to Mr. Jesse Wabol of the RGA for his tireless efforts to ensure the event



Refaluwasch Golf Association members pose with representatives of Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary School, which received \$3,500 donation from the club early this month at the Kili Café of Hyatt Regency Saipan

was a success and to Mr. George Cruz, president of the GTC PTA, for his always enthusiastic and positive leadership capabilities," added Dalsaso.

GTC received the donation last Dec. 7 during the awards

banquet of RGA's Club Championship held at the Kili Café of Hyatt Regency Saipan.

GTC acting principal Charlotte Camacho received the amount together with GTC-PTA treasurer Marlene C. Cruz.

Cruz said the donation may be used to purchase instructional materials, fix chairs or air-conditioned units, and to fund projects that will benefit students.

Wabol, for his part, thanked all private companies, individu-

als, and government officials for supporting the Memorial Cup and all RGA-sanctioned events this year.

He said next year, RGA will hold a draw again to determine the beneficiary of the Memorial Cup. Past beneficiaries were the *man'amko*, Garapan Elementary School, and individuals wishing to have something for Christmas.

RGA's Inaugural Memorial Classic was held last Nov. 8 and supported by the following companies and individuals: Asiana Airlines, First Hawaiian Bank, Gold's Gym, Aquarius Beach Tower, Curves, Hertz Rent A Car, I-Connect, Saipan Grand Hotel, Marpac, 360 Restaurant, Pt. Western Union, Docomo, Dial Rent To Own, Yuna Golf Range, Saipan Stevedore, All Star Sporting Goods, First Flores, DFS, Triple J Motors, Café at the Park, LaoLao Bay Golf Resort, Kingfisher Golf Links, Coco Restaurant, YCO,

Pacific Islands Club, Marianas Country Club, Marianas Resort & Spa, National Office Supply, McDonald's, Coca-Cola, Pacific Trading, Hyatt Regency Saipan, Nippon General Trading, Co., Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan, Coral Ocean Point, Aqua Resort Club, Flor Hair Salon, Kautz Class Co., Speaker Arnold Palacios, Reps. Heinz Hofschneider, Ray Tebuteb, Ed Salas, Ralph Torres, Rosemond Sanros, Joseph Norita and Ray Palacios, Sen. Luis Crisostomo, Tropex Graden, Sablan Topline Cleaning Agency, Ben Jones & Family, Advance Terminators, Delta Management Corp., Radio Com, PLs Water Co., Marianas Health Services, Juan L. Babauta, Torres Brothers Law Firm, Kan Pacific Saipan Ltd., Michael White, New Fresh Marker, Palms Resort, LSG, Saipan Shipping Co., and PJ, Tilde, and Matthew Igital. (*Mark Rabago*)

RAYS

From Page 28

Not even a close title match against Kagman in the first three quarters could force Punzalan to believe they will lose the crown.

The Ayuyus led in the first quarter, the Rays recovered in the second, and the latter took control of the match anew in the third before Southern's frustrating trapping defense got Kagman fed up.

From a 53-all score at the start of the fourth period, Southern

pulled away and led by as much as 23 points.

"I did expect the game to be close, but not that close, for that long. My boys were so pumped up and well prepared for the championship that we over pursued, over committed, and we pressed the issue too much," Punzalan said.

"During our timeouts, I kept telling my boys to calm down and let the game come to them, to stop trying to force the issue and play Manta basketball. It took three quarters for them to finally execute our plan. Don't get me wrong, KHS came out

to play and they tried to bring our game straight to us. For most of the game they had the opportunity to steal the championship from us," the Southern coach added.

Punzalan believed Kagman players are as equally talented as his Rays, but conditioning was Southern's advantage over their foes.

"They played real hard, with heart and gave us a run for our money. I don't think we really outplayed them, KHS has great athletes, I think we outlasted them. My boys and the teams that I coached are

the best conditioned athletes. I make it the top priority in my basketball program to have my players play at the absolute highest level of intensity. So far, this method has brought SSHS three championships in four years," he added.

Meanwhile, Punzalan thanked the following for making the MISO caging a success: BANMI Referees Association; Rufino Aguon; Gabriel White; James Feger; MHS Safe Haven staff; schools administrators; the staff and director of the Division of Sports and Recreation; and student volunteers.

THREE

From Page 28

third recipient of the donation package, but failed to attend the ceremony yesterday.

The equipment package is composed of 20 pieces of size 5 soccer balls, two pieces of ball bags, seven pairs of shin guards, a ball pump, six needles, and a pair of gloves.

The three high schools are

expected to join next month's soccer league along with two private schools.

The Manta Rays won last year's soccer league beating Mt. Carmel School in the finals.

Representatives/coaches of some schools met with NMIFA officials yesterday to discuss details of the upcoming league, which is tentatively set to kick off on Jan. 15.

The Marianas Interscholastic Sports Association will be at the

forefront of organizing the league and will get help from NMIFA, which may provide the league referees during matches and other technical/manpower assistance.

Organizers are planning to hold games twice a week with matches starting at 4:30pm. Venues have yet to be finalized, as organizers wanted a consensus from all parties involved.

Venues being considered are the Oleai Sports Complex Field, SSHS Field, Hopwood

Junior High School Field, and CPA Field.

Organizers are also looking to have a double-round robin format in the regular season if there will be four or five teams joining the league. But the format for the playoffs will still be discussed.

Games will be 11 vs. 11 with 30-minute playing time per half. A win will give teams three points, one for a draw, and none for a loss.

NORITA

From Page 28

Norita tamed the Aagingan Point course with her even par 36 on both nines. He had the second round-best net score of 67 to finish with a 146 after a slow start in the opening round shooting a 79 at Kingfisher Golf Links.

Norita had five eagles this

season, sharing the feat with Jess Castro, Ray San Nicolas, and Ron Hodges.

The police officer also made the most birdies with 28 and shared the most longest drives honors with Rick Kautz.

Other top performers this year were Joe Demapan (lowest net of 60), Manibusan (most greenies), Steve Balakrishna (most consistent), Joe I. Sablan (Most

Improved Player), Larry I. Deleon Guerrero, Joe Sablan, Martin Sablan, and Norbert Sablan (most wins in SGA-sanctioned events), and Art Deleon Guerrero, Mariano Fajardo, and Joe Sablan (most games).

Winners, including the player with the highest gross score (Mariano Fajardo) and highest net (Ray San Nicolas), received gifts during the

awards ceremony.

Demapan won the 2008 SGA Ace of Aces title with a net score of 139, beating Norbert Sablan in scorecard tiebreak.

Completing the Top 6 were Tony De Leon Guerrero (141), Martin Sablan (141), Frances Sablan (142), and Art Deleon Guerrero (142).

Twenty players joined the year-end event, including 11 of the 12 monthly winners.

CHRISTMAS

From Page 28

cao, Reylynn Sapong, and Ken Yoshimoto.

Team SaipanCell of James

Lee, Yvette Bennett, Keone Chariton, and brothers James and Joe Villacrusis timed in at 1:43.16 to place second, while a team composed of Nora Ada, Lynn Tenorio, Robert Torres, and Michael Villagomez

came in third with a time of 1:50.14.

In the solo division, Coco Restaurant's Ronald Villafria crossed the finish line first in 1:48.50.

Steve Pixley finished second

with a time of 1:54.18, while Butch Sublemente completed the Top 3 (1:57.26) in the men's division. In the women's division, Maimi Shimizu was the first finisher, beating Monica Yamaguchi.

NFL STANDINGS

AMERICAN CONFERENCE

East

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Miami	10	5	0	.667	321	300

South

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Atlanta	9	6	0	.600	388	332
Baltimore	7	8	0	.467	336	329
Bengal	7	8	0	.467	336	329
Browns	7	8	0	.467	336	329
Cincinnati	7	8	0	.467	336	329
Colts	7	8	0	.467	336	329
Giants	7	8	0	.467	336	329
Redskins	7	8	0	.467	336	329
Steelers	7	8	0	.467	336	329
Vikings	7	8	0	.467	336	329
Washington	7	8	0	.467	336	329

North

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Bengal	7	8	0	.467	336	329
Browns	7	8	0	.467	336	329
Colts	7	8	0	.467	336	329
Giants	7	8	0	.467	336	329
Redskins	7	8	0	.467	336	329
Steelers	7	8	0	.467	336	329
Vikings	7	8	0	.467	336	329
Washington	7	8	0	.467	336	329

West

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Arizona	8	7	0	.533	393	405
Chargers	8	7	0	.533	393	405
Colts	8	7	0	.533	393	405
Giants	8	7	0	.533	393	405
Redskins	8	7	0	.533	393	405
Steelers	8	7	0	.533	393	405
Vikings	8	7	0	.533	393	405
Washington	8	7	0	.533	393	405

West

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Arizona	8	7	0	.533	393	405
Ch						

Trench Warz IX: The Annihilation

PHOTOS by
MARK RABAGO

Trench Tech's Shane "Pikaboo" Alvarez beat Team Pwang's Eddie Paulis via referee stoppage after the former caught the latter with a flurry of punches in the second round on their match in Trench Warz IX: The Annihilation held last Dec. 12 at Saipan World Resort's Royal Taga Hall.



Brian "The Shotgun" Howard of Malessos Home Grown congratulates winner Giovanni "Palaxi" Palacios of Trench Tech after their bout.



Trench Tech's Fasi "Quickdraw" Jesse is on the defensive against Team D.A.T.'s Joe Cabrera. Jesse went to win the bout via rear-naked choke.



Jenipy "So-High La" Sambile connects with the right hand to the head of Tara "Tarantula" Namauleg in the first round of the island's first-ever MMA fight. Namauleg went on to outpoint Sambile.



Team Zalaka's Antonio "Xcalibur" Nekaifes sits bloodied after the referee stopped his fight against Team Xtreme's "Kill" Bill Saures.



Myron "The Natural" San Nicolas hammers away at a defenseless Team Predator Combat's "Brutal" Bryson Sablan in their semi main event won by San Nicolas.



Marianas Elite's Syl "The Deal" Teregeyo tries to extricate himself from Team Predator Combat's John "The Jackhammer" Borja. Teregeyo eventually won a mere 29 seconds into the bout with an armbar submission.



Trench Tech president Cuki Alvarez interviews Marianas Elite's Derrick "Pinchi" Ranagamar after he beat Trench Tech's "Badd" Brad Palacios on a Kimura arm-lock submission 4:17 in the first round.



Marianas Elite's Maitai "The Charger" Charley blocks a kick from Guam United Figh Team's Leo "The Assasin" Cing early in the first round. Charley went on to beat Cing despite being a last-minute replacement to Nate "The Terrible" Flores.



Marianas Elite's Kelvin "The Big Hit" Fitial mounts Spike 22 Guam's Reuben "The Booben" Quinata in the main event of Trench Warz IX: The Annihilation. Fitial won after Quinata tapped out in the last round.



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Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary School recently thanked Refuluwasch Golf Association for donating proceeds from its Inaugural Memorial Classic to the San Roque school.

Saipan Tribune Sports

28 WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2008

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Yao gets best of Yi as Rockets dominate Nets

While Yao Ming won the showdown with fellow Chinese Olympian Yi Jianlian, the Houston Rockets beat the New Jersey Nets with defense and a boost from the smallest player on the court.

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Rays bask in glory of back-to-back

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Tom Landry, one of the greatest coaches in NFL history, once said, "When you want to win a game, you have to teach. When you lose a game, you have to learn."

This holds true to Saipan Southern High School, which won the 2008-2009 Marianas Interscholastic Sports Organization Basketball League beating Kagman High School in the finals, 84-63, last Dec. 12 for the Rays' back-to-back junior varsity titles.

Southern won the inaugural junior varsity caging after sweeping the 2007-2008 season and defeating the same team, 115-103.

With a better, stronger, and faster crew this season compared to last year's Southern roster, the Rays thought another sweep is in the offing and an easy cruise will take them to the Promised Land, anew.

But it took a lone loss at the hands of Marianas High School for the Rays to realize they are not invincible and over

The Rays' Adrian Palacios goes for a layup against Mt. Carmel's Aiden Gagaring during their semis game in the MISO caging early this month at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO



confidence is synonymous to losing.

The Rays swept the first round of the three-round robin league, won their first match in the second before the Dolphins halted Southern's run, 71-70.

The Rays trailed by as much as 20 points in that loss, before they tried to bounce back and fell short.

"It hurt, no doubt, my sophomores wanted to go 16-0 for their JV years and that was a spoiler for us," Rays coach Joel Punzalan said.

"But it was best thing that happened to my boys this year. It was a humble pie for us, and it was uncharted waters because we never knew what it felt like to lose like the other teams. My boys didn't like the feeling," he added.

After the loss, the Rays played like a man possessed beating teams by wide margins and playing relentless defense like they were trailing in the game.

"Obviously in the next few games, Southern woke up a giant, winning games by more than 40. I never doubted my team. This was the best team I coached and the strongest. I had a great group of young men that I watched grow over the last two years," Punzalan said.

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Three high schools get soccer equipment anew from NMIFA

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Northern Marianas Islands Football Association donated equipment to three public high schools on Saipan to help them prepare for the 2009 soccer league in January.

Saipan Southern High School's Glenn Smith and Joel Punzalan, and Marianas High School's Maria Ornes met with NMIFA treasurer Vickie Isuka and Patricia Coleman at the NMIFA Office located on the third floor of the TSL Plaza in Garapan to receive the donation. Kagman High School is the

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Representatives of Saipan Southern High School and Marianas High School pose with the equipment package donated by Northern Mariana Islands Football Association. In the photo are, NMIFA interscholastic league's Patricia Coleman, Southern's Joel Punzalan and Glenn Smith, MHS' Maria Ornes, and NMIFA treasurer Vickie Isuka.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Awards Ceremony Friday at Charley's Cabaret at Pacific Islands Club.

Norita, besides winning the SGA March Ace of the Month, walked away with four other individual awards leaving the stage with his hands full of gifts from SGA sponsors.

The five-handicapper Norita recorded the lowest gross, most eagles, birdies, and longest drive in the 2008 season.

His 72 in second round of the SGA Ace of Aces Tournament at Coral Ocean Point was the club's best gross tying Edward Manibusan's score.

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Ned Norita may not have won the SGA Ace of Aces Tournament, but still came out a winner during Saipan Golfer Association's Christmas Party and

Ned Norita, right, receives his SGA March Ace of the Month trophy from Saipan Golf Association president Martin Sablan.

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Norita takes home most awards in SGA

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Ned Norita may not have won the SGA Ace of Aces Tournament, but still came out a winner during Saipan Golfer Association's Christmas Party and

Ned Norita, right, receives his SGA March Ace of the Month trophy from Saipan Golf Association president Martin Sablan.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Christmas Island Relay set for Saturday

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REPORTER

This Saturday is the perfect time to get rid off those extra pounds gained from the holiday season, as Northern Marianas Athletes hosts the 2008 Christmas Island Relay.

The 13.7-mile long relay race will start at Pacific Islands Club in San Antonio and will end at the Last Command Post in Marpi.

Interested participants can compete in the solo and team division races.

Registration fee for solo runners is \$10, while each member in the team event will only pay an entrance fee of \$5.



Members will alternately run each mile from PIC to the Last Command Post. Teams are responsible for providing transportation to and from every mile marker.

Three runners are expected to complete three miles each, another will run 2.7 miles, while the fifth member will cover the remaining two miles.

The race will start at 6am, while registration will begin at 5:15am.

More than 70 runners joined last year's event with the Jacque Wonenberg-led We Are Legend finishing the race in one hour, 33 minutes, and four seconds.

Joining Wonenberg on the team were Nate Mateo, Matthew Man-

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From left, Gary Ramsey, Dawn Hammermeister, Neghar Rastguiy, and Florian Braig near the finish line at the Las Command Post in Marpi during last year's Christmas Island Relay.

SAIPAN TRIBUNE